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MODE AND SUBJECTS

OF

BAPTISM

EXAMINED,

IN SEVEN SERMONS.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BAPTISTS.

BY DANIEL MERRILL, A. M.

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN SEDGWICK.

Doth our law judge any man before it hear him, and know what he doeth? *Nicodemus.* John vii. 51.

Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. *Jesus Christ.*

SIXTH EDITION.

Raleigh:

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M.DCCC.VII.

TO THE READER.

FELLOW-TRAVELLER TO ETERNITY,

YOU and I are the offspring of God. The period of our return to him swiftly approaches. Then the motive I have had in writing, and which you shall have had in reading, will both be known. How, and how far, the following pages will affect my present and future life, is with the LORD. How far they shall affect thine, is also with Him. One thing is certain; the truth of what I have written will be soon known. You are willing to know it now, provided you know the value of the gospel, and possess a heart humbled by its doctrines.

Reader, be not offended at what I have written, till you be sure it is false. Do thyself no harm. Read, consider, compare every part and the whole with divine truth, in such a manner and spirit, as shall yield thee a pleasing reflection in the world to come.

If the subject, as here presented, be true, it is a serious truth. If an error, it is a serious one. It nearly concerns the kingdom of EMANUEL, to whose pleasure and mercy the whole is cheerfully resigned,

By, reader, thy servant for JESUS' sake,

THE AUTHOR.

Sedgwick, Dec. 27, 1804.

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THE

MODE AND SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

SERMON I.

MATTHEW xxviii. 19, 20.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. *Amen.*

IT hath pleased the Father of Mercies to bestow on fallen man a revelation from heaven. In it is contained the scheme of grace, which brings life and immortality to light. It shews the way by which to escape the wrath to come, and to find the favour of God. All scripture is given by his inspiration, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Till the human heart be humbled, in measure, man feels not his need of divine teaching; nor will he make the scriptures the man of his counsel. But, my brethren and people, it is doubtless the case, that many of you possess a willingness to have your principles and practice squared by the word and testimony of Jesus Christ. My text contains some of the last words of our great High Priest. It is the general orders which he gave his first apostles, and left for the instruction, practice and comfort of all their successors, to the end of the world. In the verse which precedes my text, Christ informs us, that all power in heaven and in earth is given unto him. His words, therefore, are clothed with authority. May we hear, and fear, and be obedient! Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto the King of Sion, What dost thou?

So far as we be christians, all that is necessary to enforce obedience is, to know what Christ would have us

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to do. Perhaps not a passage in all the oracles of truth contains more extensive instruction than do the words of my text. The commands are exceedingly broad; the baptismal institution comprehends all obedient disciples; and the comforting promise is durable as the world.

In my text, Christ Jesus, the head of the church and lord of all, constituted his present and succeeding disciples to be apostles unto all nations. It contains their commission, and general and particular orders. In it they are directed,

I. To go and disciple all nations.

II. To baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

III. He directs these newly constituted apostles, and all their successors, to teach their baptized disciples to observe all things whatsoever he had given in commandment.

Lastly. For their encouragement and comfort, he adds, And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

I suppose it will be expedient, and with me it is an indispensible duty, that I lay each of these propositions as fairly and as fully before you as I can. But I shall not observe the order in which they lie in my text, which is as I have just stated them. For I have many things to say unto you, in agreement with my text, but fear that you are not, all of you, able to bear them now. We shall therefore begin with the

II. Which contains Christ's command to baptize, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, those who shall be discipled of all nations.

Nor do I purpose to call your attention, at this time, to the whole which is implied in this proposition. But what I purpose is, to define a few words which appertain to the ordinance, and then collect the scripture account of baptism, with some other texts, which may throw light upon the subject. Afterwards, in discourses which may follow, I may produce evidence that my definition of baptism is accurate and just; and shew how the apostles and primitive christians understood this matter, and how they practised. When this is done, it will be easily seen

what is the outward and visible part of baptism; and then the purport, end and design of the institution, may call for some attention.

Before I proceed to open, illustrate and confirm these particulars, I have several things to say unto you. For I wish you to attend to the subject without partiality and without hypocrisy. I pray God to remove darkness and all prejudice from your minds, that you may, indeed, come to the law and to the testimony of Jesus Christ in this matter.

You will consider me as under the strongest worldly inducements to continue to believe and practise as I have heretofore done; for should I, after mature consideration, be constrained to believe and practise differently, you will be released from all legal obligations to afford me any farther support; my relations will, the most of them, probably be greatly shocked and displeased at the report; many, whom I highly value as christians, and numbers of them zealous preachers of the gospel, will, it may be, consider me as lost, and worse than lost, to the church and world; and, besides this, multitudes will, no doubt, say all manner of evil against me. All this being true, with a thousand other connected smaller evils, and nothing of a worldly nature in prospect, save what is contained in the promise of Jesus Christ, you cannot but conclude that I shall proceed no farther in this matter than I am obliged to, in following the Lamb of God whithersoever he goeth.

Having said thus much with respect to myself, I will still add, that should a change in my belief and practice, respecting the subject on hand, bring me to a more full belief and practice of the truth, I shall, on the whole, be a gainer. But, should a change take place, and I be called to sustain all the evils which I may calculate upon, and after all be plunged myself into a hurtful and bewildered error, surely all the meek and lowly in heart would rather commiserate than revile me.

Another thing I would mention to you, so that the subject may, if it possibly can, meet your minds without prejudice. You ought not to fix your judgments, nor found your belief, upon the arguments or confessions of great and good men, any farther than such arguments and

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confessions are conformed with the scriptures of truth. Should we hearken to what the greatest and best of men have confest and affirmed of the subject which we are about to consider, and have our belief and practice corresponding with what they have written, the matter would most evidently, go against what we have, in time past, both believed and practised. For they have very generally, or very many of them, if not all of them, confessed or affirmed, however their practice may have been, that immersion was the mode practised by the apostles and primitive church. This I purpose to prove to you in its proper place.

What I have more to add, before I proceed to the main business, is, to state a few plain truths.

1. Baptism is a positive institution, about which we can know nothing, as to its being a christian ordinance, but from what Christ, and those inspired by his Spirit have taught us.

2. All which we are required to believe and practise with respect to the christian ordinance of baptism, is declared to us by Jesus Christ and his forerunner and apostles.

3. When Jesus Christ first instituted the ordinance of baptism, he, no doubt, delivered his mind so clearly and fully upon the subject, that his immediate disciples and apostles understood and practised as he would have them.

4. Every thing which hath, by the precepts and commandments of men, been added since, is distinct from the ordinance, and makes no part of it.

5. No man, or body of men, have any more authority to add to this ordinance, or to diminish from it, than they have to institute a new one, and call it Christ's.

6. Whenever, and wherever, this ordinance is changed, as to lose the intent of the institutor, there the ordinance is lost, and becomes no christian ordinance at all.

Having laid these preparatory observations, remarks, plain truths before you, we proceed to consider the subject now on hand, which is

Christ's command to baptize, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, those who be disciples of all nations.

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greeably to what is proposed, we are—
To define a few words which appertain to the ordi-
e of baptism. These are—
(Baptisterion) Greek; *baptisterium* and *lavacrum*,
n; a font, a bath, a washing-place, a vessel to wash
ody in; English.
Baptisma and *baptismos*, Greek; *baptisma* and *lotio*,
ablutia saura, Latin; baptism, washing, sacred, cere-
ial washing; English.
Baptistes, Greek; *baptista*, Latin; one who dips, a
ist; English.
Baptizo, Greek; *baptizo*, *mergo*, *lavo*, Latin; to bap-
, to dip all over, to wash; English.
Louo, Greek; *lavo*, Latin; to wash, to rinse, to bathe;
lish.
I. We are to collect the scripture account of baptism,
ther with some other texts, which may throw light up-
he subject.
We will begin with those passages which speak of the
tism of John.
. *Matth.* iii. 5, 6, 7. Then went out to him Jerusa-
and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan,
were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.
when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees
ne to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of
ers, &c.

2. Verse 11. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, &c.

3. Verses 13, 14, 15, 16. Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him: but John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? and Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness: then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water.

4. *Matth.* xxi. 25, 26, 27. The baptism of John, whence was it, from heaven or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we should say from heaven, he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? But, if we shall say of men, we fear the people, for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell, &c.

5. *Mark* i. 4, 5. John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him IN the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

6. Verses 8, 9, 10. I indeed have baptized you with water. And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John IN Jordan, and straightway coming up out of the water, &c.

7. *Mark* xi. 30. The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?

8. *Luke* iii. 3. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins.

9. Verses 7, 8. Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers! bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance.

10. Verse 12. Then came also publicans to be baptized.

11. Verse 16. I indeed baptize you with water.

12. Verse 21. Now, when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also, being baptized, &c.

13. *Luke* vii. 29, 30. And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with

the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

14. *Luke* xx. 4. The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?

15. *John* i. 25, 26. Why baptizest thou, then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize with water.

16. Verse 28. Beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

17. Verse 31. That he should be made manifest to Israel: therefore I am come baptizing with water.

18. Verse 33 He that sent me to baptize with water.

19. *John* iii. 23. And John also was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there; and they came and were baptized.

20. *John* iv. 1. The Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John.

21. *John* x. 40. Beyond Jordan, into the place where John at first baptized.

22. *Acts* i. 5. John truly baptized with water.

23. Verse 22. Beginning from the baptism of John.

24. *Acts* x. 37. After the baptism which John preached.

25. *Acts* xi. 16. John indeed baptized with water.

26. *Acts* xiii. 24. When John had first preached before his coming, the baptism of repentance to all the people.

27. *Acts* xviii. 25. He (Apollos) spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

28. *Acts* xix. 3, 4. Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

We will next turn our attention to those texts which mention Christ's baptism.

1. *Matth.* xxviii. 19. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

2. *Mark* xvi. 15, 16. And he said unto them, Go ye

into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth, and is bapt zed, shall be saved.

3. *John* iii. 5. Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, &c.

4. Verse 22. After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea, and there tarried with them, and baptized.

5. Verse 26. Behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.

6. *John* iv. 1, 2. When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard, that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples.)

7. *Acts* ii. 38. Then Peter said unto them, repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

8 Verse 41. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized.

9. *Acts* viii. 12, 13. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, &c.

10. *Acts* viii. 16. Only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

11. Verses 36, 37, 38, 39. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water, and the eunuch said, See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still. And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized them. And when they were come out of the water, &c.

12. *Acts* ix. 18. And he (Saul) arose, and was baptized.

13. *Acts* x. 47, 48. Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.

14. *Acts* xvi. 15. And when she (Lydia) was baptized and her household.

15. Verse 33. And was baptized, he (the jailor) and all his, straightway.

16. *Acts* xviii. 8. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized.

17. *Acts* xix. 5. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

18. *Acts* xxii. 12. And now why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord

19. *Rom.* vi. 3, 4 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

20. 1 *Cor.* i. 13, 14, 15, 16 17. Were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanus; Besides, I know not whether I had baptized any other; for Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.

21. 1 *Cor.* vi. 11. But ye are washed.

22. 1 *Cor.* 12, 13. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body*.

23. 1 *Cor.* xv. 29. Else what shall they do that are baptized for the dead?

24. *Gal.* iii. 27. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.

25. *Eph.* iv. 5. One baptism.

26. *Eph.* v. 26. That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.

27. *Col.* ii. 12. Buried with him in baptism, wherein ye also are risen with him.

28. *Titus* iii. 5 According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

29. *Heb.* vi. 2. The doctrine of baptisms†.

* This intends, as some suppose, the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

† It is not certain that this hath any reference to christian baptism: If it have, it must refer not to that only. See *Doddridge in loc.*

30. *Heb.* x. 22. Our bodies washed with pure water.

31. 1 *Peter* iii. 21. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth now save us (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.)

These, I believe, are all the texts in the New Testament which have a plain and obvious reference to either the baptism of John, or of Christ. They afford us the sum of all the knowledge which we can have of either the mode or subjects of christian baptism. What these passages say, we may believe; what they do not countenance, we may not believe. I will now set before you those passages where washing is mentioned.

1. *Matth.* vi. 17. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head, and *(nipsai)* wash thy face.

2. *Matth.* xv. 2. Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they *(niptontai)* wash not their hands when they eat bread.

3. *Matth.* xxxvii. 24. When Pilate saw he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water and *(apenipsato)* washed his hands.

4. *Mark* vii. 2 And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say with *(oniptois)* unwashen hands.

5. Verse 3. For the Pharisees and all the Jews, except they *(nipsontai)* wash their hands oft, they eat not, &c.

6. Verse 4. When they come from the market, except they *(baptisontai)* wash, they eat not; and many other things there be which they have received to hold, as the *(baptismous)* washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables.

7. Verse 5. But eat bread with *(aniptois)* unwashed hands.

8. Verse 8. For, laying aside the commandments of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the *(baptismous)* washing of pots and cups.

9. *Luke* v. 2. And they *(apeplunan)* were washing their nets.

10. *Luke* vii. 38. And stood at his feet, behind him, weeping, and began *(brechein)* to wash his feet.

11. Verse 44. And he turned to the woman, and said

unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest no water for my feet: but she *(ebrexe)* hath washed my feet with tears.

12. *Luke* xi. 38. And when the Pharisees saw it, that he had not first *(ebaptisthe)* washed before dinner.

13. *John* ix. 7. And said unto him, Go, and *(nipsai)* wash in the pool of Siloam; he went his way therefore and *(enipsato)* washed.

14. Verse 15. Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight: he said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I *(enipsamen)* washed and do see.

15. *John* xiii. 5. After that he poured water into a bason, and began *(niptein)* to wash the disciples' feet.

16. Verse 6. And Peter said unto him, Lord, dost thou *(nipteis)* wash my feet?

17. Verse 8. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never *(nipses)* wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I *(nipso)* wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

18. Verse 10. Jesus saith unto him, He that is *(oleloumenos)* washed, needeth not save *(nipsasthai)* to wash his feet, &c.

19. Verse 14. If I then, your Lord and master, have *(enipsa)* washed your feet, ye also ought (*niptein*) to wash one another's feet.

20 *Acts* ix. 37. And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick and died, whom when they had (*lousantes*) washed.

21. *Acts* xvi. 33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and (*elousen*) washed their stripes.

22. *Acts* xxvii. 16. And now, why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized, and (*apolousai*) wash away thy sins.

23. 1 *Cor.* vi. 11. But such were some of you, but ye (*apelousasthe*) are washed.

24 *Eph.* v. 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with *(loutro)* the washing of water by the word.

25. 1 *Tim.* v. 10 If she *(enipsen)* have washed the saints' feet.

26. *Titus* iii. 5. By the *(loutrou)* washing of regeneration.

27. *Heb.* ix. 10. Which stood only in meats and drinks, and *(diaphorois baptismois)* divers washings.

28. *Heb.* x. 22. Having our bodies *(leloumenoi)* washed with pure water.

29. 2 *Peter* ii. 22. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb—and the sow that *(lousamene)* was washed, &c.

30. *Rev.* i. 5. Unto him that loved us and *(lousanti)* washed us from our sins in his own blood.

31. *Rev.* vii. 14. These are they who came out of great tribulation, and *(epulnan)* have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb.*

Those passages which make mention of *sprinkling*, with the Greek words used, now call for your attention.

1. *Heb.* ix. 13. For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer, *(rantizousa)* sprinkling the unclean, &c.

2. Verse 19. He (Moses) took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool and hyssop, and (*errantise*) sprinkled both the book and all the people.

3. *Heb.* x. 22. Having our hearts (*errantismenoi*) sprinkled from an evil conscience.

4. *Heb.* xi. 28. Through faith he kept the passover and the (*proschusin*) sprinkling of blood.

5. *Heb.* xii. 24. And to the blood of (*rantismon*) sprinkling.

6. 1 *Peter* i. 2. And to the (*rantismon*) sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.

Lastly, You will now give attention, for a moment, to those passages of scripture where the word DIP is mentioned.

1. *Luke* xvi. 24. That he may (*bapse*) dip his finger in water.

2. *Matth.* xxvi. 23. And he answered and said, He that (*embapsas*) dipp th his hand with me in the dish.

3. *Mark* xiv. 20. And he answered and said unto them, It is one of the twelve, that (*embaptomenos*) dippeth with me in the dish.

4. *John* xiii. 26. And he answered, He it is to whom

* *Pluno* properly signifies to wash clothes; as *louo* the body, and *nipto* the face and hands.

I shall give a sop when I have (*bapsas*) dipped it; and when he had (*embapsas*) dipped the sop, &c.

5. *Rev.* xix. 13. And he was clothed with a vesture (*bebammenon*) dipped in blood.

A few remarks on what we have passed over will close the present discourse.

1. We see that all the words which appertain to the ordinance of baptism, signify the same which they would, provided immersion were the scripture mode.

2. We see that the subject of baptism is very repeatedly mentioned in the New Testament. It is brought to view expressly in about three score passages.

3. Whenever baptism is mentioned, and neither the word *baptizo* nor *baptismos* is used; the word substituted plainly intimates that bathing, or washing the body all over, is the mode; for this is the signification of *louo*, which is the word, and the only word, which the scriptures employ in the room of *baptizo*.

4. Whenever *baptizo* or *baptismos* is translated washing, a ceremonial and not a common washing is manifestly intended,

5. We find that in all the places where sprinkling is mentioned, the original words *rantizo* and *proschusin* are very different from *baptizo* and *baptismos*.

6. You will please to observe, that wherever we find, through the New Testament, the word to dip, it is from the same theme whence *baptizo* comes.

7. We see that every thing looks as though *immersion* might be the *mode*; and, as for *sprinkling*, there is, to say the least, nothing which *looks* like it.

SERMON II.

MATTHEW xxviii. 19, 20.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world *Amen*

THE business which we are now upon depends very much upon the definitions of certain words, and

principally upon the definition of the word *baptize*, and upon the certain evidence of such definition, or definitions, being accurate and just. For we can no otherwise understand what God the Lord saith unto us, than by knowing the import of the words by which he is pleased to communicate his will. The Great Teacher, who came from God, hath doubtless communicated his mind so explicitly, that the humble in heart may know the common matters which relate to faith and practice. If we devoutly search the scriptures, and seek wisdom as silver, and search for her as for hid treasure, God will make us to understand knowledge, and to serve him with acceptable practice. The Spirit of the Lord hath, most certainly, chosen acceptable words, words of definite meaning. We are to search out their signification, and to be obedient. I cannot judge of their signification for you, nor can I answer for the judgment which you shall make up, nor can you for me.

I am, by my office, obliged to exhibit, so far as I can, all those divine truths which relate to faith and practice. I am obliged to believe and practise according to the best light which I can gather, or have in any way afforded me. You are under similar obligations.

Whilst we proceed, I wish you to believe, fully, two things; one is, that truth, if believed and practised, will not, on the whole, harm you. The other is, that the most sure way to acquire truth is, to be of a humble and obedient mind, ready to receive the truth. For God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.

In the preceding discourse, we attended to the definition of certain words which appertain to the ordinance of baptism; and then collected the scripture account of baptism, together with some other texts, which are supposed to throw light upon the subject under consideration. In this discourse we are—

III. To produce the more direct evidence, that my definitions of baptism, and to baptize, are accurate and just.

The definition which I gave of baptism, was, a *washing*, a *sacred*, a *ceremonial* washing. I will now add to this definition, that it is immersion, or dipping one all over in water.

The definition which I gave of the word *baptizo*, is, to dip all over, to wash. I will also add, that the word signi-

fies, to wash the body, or any thing, all over. What I mean is, that these are the significations of the words *baptisma* and *baptizo*, which are rendered baptism and to baptize.

I am now to produce evidence, that this is a just and accurate definition of the words.

You will observe, that this is quite different from the *subjects* of baptism; that is another subject, which must be attended to in its place.

The evidence which I have to offer, in order to fix precisely the just sense and meaning of the words *baptism* and to *baptize*, is contained in the following facts. The 1st comprises what the Greek Lexicon, Concordance, and two English Dictionaries, testify of the words.

Schrevelius's Lexicon testifies, the import of *baptism* is *lotio*, washing. Also that to *baptize* signifies to *wash*, to put under water, or under any other liquid thing; to sink, dip in, duck or plunge over head, to immerse.

Butterworth's Concordance says, baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, instituted by Jesus Christ, whereby a professed believer in Christ is, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, immersed in and covered with water, and then raised up out of it, as a sign of his fellowship with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection, and a sign of his own death to sin, and resurrection to newness of life here, and to life eternal hereafter. The same Concordance defines the word to baptize, thus—to dip, immerse, or plunge.

Entick's Dictionary says, that—*Baptism* is a sacrament that admits into the church—*Baptizer*, one who christens or dips—*Baptistery*, the place of baptizing at, a font—*Baptize*, to christen, plunge, overwhelm—*Baptized*, admitted to baptism, dipped, &c.

Bailey's Dictionary, speaking of baptism, or rather the place in which persons were baptized, says, *Baptistery* is either the place or vessel in which persons are baptized. In ancient times, this being performed by immersion, the persons so initiated went into a river and were plunged; but in the time of Constantine the Great, chapels, or places on purpose to baptize in, were built in great cities, which was performed in the eastern and warmer countries by dipping the persons; but in process of time, in the

western and colder countries, sprinkling was substituted in place of dipping; which was the origin of our fonts in churches.

2. I will repeat some of the attendant or circumstantial facts, which have relation to the ordinance of baptism, that you may look at them, and judge for yourselves whether the preceding definition appears just.

John baptized IN the river Jordan

He was baptizing in Enon, because there was much water there.

The name of the place where baptism was administered, is *bapti terion* or *baptistery*, which signifies a place in which to wash the body all over.

Baptism signifies to dip, plunge, immerse, or wash the body all over in water.

Baptizer signifies one who dips, plunges, or washes the body all over in water.

To baptize signifies to plunge under water, to dip, or to wash the body all over.

To be baptized is to be plunged, immersed, or washed all over in water.

Does this whole matter, taking so many of the words and some circumstances, and finding them all so well agreeing together, help you, in any degree, to the definition of the word *baptize?* Supposing these things be facts, and you had never any prejudice for, or against, the word baptize, would you be able to gather the meaning of it from what hath been said?

There is an objection starting in the minds of some of you, which should be now obviated, lest it prejudice your minds from the truth.

The objection is, Do not the words signify some other things, as well as those which have been mentioned?

Ans. I have thought they did: but I have searched in several dictionaries, and read many authors upon the words, yet have not found one dictionary which has given a definition of the words different from what I have given; nor one author who has been able to shew, that the true meaning of the words is any otherwise than what I have mentioned. Besides, the very course of argumentation which Dr. *Lathrop*, Mr. *Cleaveland* and others have taken,

by which to prove that *baptizo* hath some other signification than to dip, immerse, to bury or overwhelm, is an implicit confession that they were not able to prove any such thing. It is also a strong presumptive argument, that no different signification can be found.

Their argument is this: *Bapto* signifies, in one instance in the Old Testament, to wet with the dew of heaven.—*Baptizo* is the offspring of *bapto*, and consequently may be taken in the same sense. This argument is of the same weight with the following: My father believes in sprinkling, as being baptism: I am his offspring, and consequently I believe the same; when the fact is, I am largely convinced that it is no such thing. Would gentlemen employ such an argument, did not their cause labour? Such an argument, when it stands as it does at the front of all their supposed evidence, is an implicit confession that they cannot prove what they wish to*.

This matter will have further attention in another place.

3. The words *baptismos* and *baptizo* have two, and only two translations, in the New Testament. These two are *baptism* and *washing*. They are very generally rendered *baptism* or *to baptize*. This is their usual translation. But several times in Mark, Luke, and in the epistle to the Hebrews, they are rendered *washing:* as the washing of

* Since writing the above, I have met with *Cole's Latin Dictionary*, which gives one English of *baptizo*, to *sprinkle*. It hath, indeed, been matter of no little surprize, that all modern dictionary compilers have not given one definition of the word baptize, to sprinkle; for it, indeed, is one signification, which the practice of many christians, for two or three hundred years past, has given to the word.

Had all lexicons and all dictionaries, for the two last centuries, borne united testimony, that one sense of the word *baptizo* was to sprinkle, it would not have been half so unaccountable as it now is, that they have so generally retained the ancient and primitive significations, and refused to adopt the modern one, which prejudice, convenience, and modern practice have given to it. Indeed, could a thousand modern lexicons and dictionaries be found, which should say to *sprinkle* is one sense in which *baptizo* is used, it would all come to nothing, unless they should testify that this is one of its ancient and primitive significations: and, even then, it would come to no more than this, that the word is less determinate, than it is now supposed to be. Could they do this, it would be still nothing, unless they prove the scriptures use it in this sense, which they cannot do. But if they could, it would not be fully to their point, unless they can shew, that it is thus used in application to the ordinance.

pots and cups, and brazen vessels, and tables, or seats on which they reclined, when they ate meat; and *diaphorois baptismois* in Hebrew, is rendered *divrs washings*.

In the law given by Moses, the people were, on many occasions, to bathe their bodies, and wash their clothes in water; and also to put their pots and cups and brazen vessels into water, that they might be cleansed from ceremonial uncleanness. To these legal ceremonies the Pharisees had added traditional ones, which were, no doubt, observed in the same manner as those appointed by the Lord. If so, then the washing of pots, &c. in Mark, was putting them into water, as the command was to do, Levit xi, 32. The divers washings in Heb. ix, 10, were ceremonial washings, or bathings, in which the body was washed, or dipped, Numb. xix, 19. This being the case, does not this matter go to confirm, or determine, what is the definition of baptism?

4. We will now mention a few noted witnesses, who have given their testimony as to the meaning of the word *baptizo*.

Calvin, a very warm opposer of the baptists, shall, as a witness in this cause, speak first. His testimony is, "Howbeit, the very word of baptizing signifieth to dip."

Zanchius, as brought forward by the Rev. Mr. Butterworth, shall be my next witness. He says, *baptizo* is to immerse, plunge under, to overwhelm in water.

I could quote, or bring forward, a multitude of witnesses, and all from our own order, the pædobaptists, to prove the same point. But in the mouth of two or three witnesses, if they be good ones, every word shall be established. We will therefore produce but one more; that shall be good Doctor Owen. "For the original and natural signification of it (*baptizo*), it signifies to dip, to plunge*."

5. I will mention to you a Greek word, which Paul repeatedly uses, as signifying the same thing as *baptizo*, and where he means the same thing, namely baptism.

In 1 Cor. vi. 11. Paul, speaking to the Corinthians of divers kinds of vile sinners, says, "And such were some of you; but ye are *washed*," &c.

* Ancient Dialogue.

Eph. v. 26. That he might sanctify and cleanse it (the church) with the *washing* of water, by the word.

Heb. x. 22. Let us draw near, with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our *bodies washed* with pure water.

The pædobaptists acknowledge that *washing*, in these texts, means *baptism*, and I know not that any of them deny it. Baptism and washing appear to be used as synonimous words, or as words signifying the same thing. If this be the case, then the two words, *baptizo* and *louo*, which are translated, one to baptize, and the other to wash mean the same thing, and are thus intended by the apostle. Then, provided we can determine what *louo* means, we can also determine what is the signification of *baptizo*. This word *louo* signifies to wash and to bathe the body in water, for thus it is generally, if not universally, used, and from it is *loutron*, a bath, or place to wash the body in. Besides, the word *louo* is never used in the New Testament, nor any where else, to my knowledge, to signify either sprinkling or common washing. Its appropriate sense appears to be bathing or washing any thing all over; as you may see, Acts ix. 37, and xvi. 33; 2 Peter ii. 22; which are the only places where I recollect the word *louo* is used, save where the ordinance of baptism appears to be referred to. This being the case, the matter appears just as it would, provided the ordinance included the bathing of the body in water. This is letting scripture interpret itself; and the interpretation which it gives is, baptism is bathing or washing the body in water. This, therefore, may help you a little towards the determining in your own minds, what is the signification of *baptizo*. For *louo* is repeatedly used in scripture, as importing the same mode of washing which is commanded in the ordinance of baptism.

6. Paul's description of the mode of baptizing, or what is done to those who are baptized, may afford you farther light upon the subject.

Paul brings this matter up to the Roman and Colossian christians, as a matter well known to them. To the former he says, Rom. vi. 4. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised

up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. To the other he says, Col. ii, 12, Buried with him in baptism; wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

Upon these texts, Dr. Doddridge has the following note: "It seems the part of candour to confess, that here is an allusion to baptism by immersion, as was most usual in those early times." Here the good doctor says, "as was *most usual*:" this I shall, by and by, explain to you.

In the mean time, you will please to pay due attention to what was done to those who were baptized, and which appears to be familiar to the Roman and Colossian christians. The apostle makes no remarks, and explains nothing to them, but speaks to them as though they would and did well understand what he meant, when he said, "We are buried with him by baptism into death;" and "Buried with him in baptism. It is plain fact, that Paul thus speaks, and it also appears very plainly, that he had no apprehension but that he should be understood.

Bishop Hordly's declaration appears to be much in point: "If baptism," says he, "had been THEN,' *i. e.* in the apostles' days, "performed as it is now among us, we should never have so much as heard of this form of expression, of dying and rising again in this rite*."

These things I have thought it my duty to lay before you, that I might assist you, by a number of plain facts, to form a judgment, each one for himself, what the meaning of baptism is, and what the word to *baptize* signifies.

I have still more light upon this subject, and shall, in the next discourse, lay it within your view. It will perhaps be, to some of you, more convincing than any thing which I have as yet exhibited. But previously I will make one observation, and it is this: all the evidence which we have been exhibiting, we have on one side of the question; and, if I mistake not, none on the other to counteract it; for, if my memory and judgment be correct, the wisest and best of men, of our own denomination, have asserted, that these things are so. I do not say that all good men have; but the most learned have, and some who have appeared very pious.

* Ten Letters.

But you will say, Why have they not practised differently, if they have thus believed? I am not answerable for their practice; but if the Lord will, I shall, ere long, give you the reasons which they assign.

I shall only add, for the present, two or three consequences, and then leave the subject for your consideration.

1. The baptists have, against our practice, and for theirs, that kind of evidence which is, perhaps, in all cases but the present, considered the most unequivocal and certain. This evidence is given in by a cloud of witnesses, who whilst they are bearing their testimony, condemn themselves every sentence they utter. If these men, who are confessed by both sides to be both pious and learned, may be believed, the cause will most certainly be determined against us; for there was never a clearer case. They unitedly testify that the scripture mode of baptism is immersion, but omit the practice. In this they condemn themselves.

2. The scripture sense, and, for aught appears, the only sense, of baptism, is dipping, immersion, burying in water, being overwhelmed, and the like.

3. We are brought to this dilemma, either to commence baptists, as to the mode, or to do as our fathers have done, confess the truth in theory, and neglect it in practice.

SERMON III.

MATTHEW xxviii. 19, 20.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. *Amen.*

MEN, brethren, and fathers, we are all still upon a very important subject; a subject which highly concerns us as christians; a subject in which our feeling, our reputation, and our peace too, may not be a little concerned. Many things, not to say every thing, call upon us

not to go too fast; and, at the same time, obedience to our common Lord forbids all backwardness in pursuing where his truth and Spirit lead us.

All which I request of you is, with candour hear, with readiness obey, what truth shall dictate.

Should we, after long and serious deliberation, be obliged to believe and practise differently from what we have heretofore done, we shall be much exposed to two things: one is, to be reviled; the other, to revile again. What we shall need is, patience to bear the one, and grace that we may avoid the other.

Perhaps human nature is more inclined to nothing than to an overbearing spirit. It is perfectly consonant with human nature to make ourselves, and not the scriptures, the standard of both faith and practice. The natural consequence of this is censure against all who dare to think, or act, as we do not. To guard you against unreasonable and common prejudice, I will, for your consideration, suggest a thought, which we may do well to remember; and it is this: many, who shall believe and practise as we have long done, may be as honest and faithful as we then were. This being true, the following consequence is plain, that the line of conduct which the baptists ought to have practised, in months and years past, towards us, the same, if we be baptists, will it become us to pursue with relation to others. It requires not much foresight to discover, that we shall need much of that wisdom which is profitable to direct.

Whilst it may be indispensable with us to use every prudent mean to diffuse that light which God may graciously afford us, it will be our wisdom to do every thing in such a manner as not to heighten, but, if possible, to lower, the prejudices of good people.

Whilst you, my dear friends and people know that light chaseth away the darkness, and that truth will ultimately prevail against every error, I solicit your candour and prayerful attention, that error may not be retained, or prevail against any of us, to our wounding.

Our attention hath already been called to the definition of a number of words, which relate to the ordinance of baptism, to the scripture account of baptism, together

with some other texts, which were supposed to throw light upon the subject, and also to some evidence in support of the given definitions. As the great question turns upon what is commanded, and as that cannot be otherwise known than by making sure the import of the words used, we shall therefore search for additional light and certainty, by enquiring—

IV. How the apostles and primitive christians understood this matter, and how they practised.

If this can be made plain, then, perhaps, your mind will be satisfied, and your judgment made up.

I proceed to lay the evidence before you.

There appears no necessity of spending time to produce evidence that the apostles understood the matter to be as I have proved to you that it was: for they, no doubt, understood the words which Christ spake, and the commands which he gave; besides, if the apostles and primitive church practised thus, it is evident that they thus understood it; for doubtless they, especially the apostles, were honest men, and practised as they understood Jesus Christ to have directed them.

I will here make two observations to you; and I wish you to remember them.

The first is, no person should, especially in important matters, make up his judgment, that any particular subject is true, till he has evidence of its truth.

The other is, the best proof which the nature of any case admits of, may and ought to be considered as evidence, and so received by us, as to those things we are called to believe and practise.

There are different degrees of evidence; the highest kind produces knowledge. When the evidence is small, it produces a weak and dubious belief. But where it is such that, on supposition the thing be true, the evidence could not be greater than it is, there we are obliged to yield our assent, and we do violence to our reason if we will not believe.

The evidence which we have with respect to the practice of the apostles in the matter of baptizing, differs in degree, and, in some measure, in kind, from the evidence which we have respecting the practice of the church in later ages as to the same matter. But if we have, with

respect to the practice of both, the best evidence which the different cases admit of, we are under obligations to believe the evidence good, and the facts true which are supported by it.

We have much the same kind of evidence with respect to the practice of the apostles, which we have as to the practice of the church for many ages after them. Mr. Baxter, bishop Hoadly and others, testify, that the apostolic practice was immersion. We have, moreover, as to their practice, a much higher kind of evidence. In support of their practice, I shall produce the best kind of evidence, and afterwards, whilst speaking of the practice of the church in succeeding ages, may occasionally bring forward some of the other kind of evidence, in support of the apostles' practice.

As to the practice of the apostles, in the administration of baptism, I observe, we have in the scriptures four distinct sources of evidence.

1st Is this. When baptism is mentioned by the disciples and apostles, and the common word is not used, they uniformly employ one particular word, and this word is of very determinate signification, and expresses the bathing, or washing, of the body in water, as Heb. x, 22, (*leioumeni*) *washed* with pure water. Acts xxiii, 16. Arise and be baptized, and (*apolousai*) wash away thy sins. 1 Cor vi, 11. But ye are (*apolousasthe*) *washed*. By the determinate signification of this word, their practice appears to be immersion.

2. The apostles were commanded to dip, immerse, or plunge all over in water the persons whom they admitted to this ordinance. This is evident from the determinate signification of the word to baptize. Says the command, Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them, &c. We have before proved what is the signification of this word, and consequently what Christ commanded his disciples, when he sent them to baptize.

I do not now say that the apostles immersed any; but this is what I say, they were commanded thus to do. I leave it for you to determine whether they did or whether they did not.

3. I observe to you, that the New Testament, where-

ever it speaks of the apostles baptizing any, says they immersed them, or dipt them all over in water. For this is the plain, literal and common, if not the only signification of the word. I still leave it with you to determine whether the apostles did or did not practise thus.

Lest some of you may have forgotten what I have before proved to you, and consequently entertain some doubt, whether baptism may not sometimes signify the application of water in a different way; we will make two or three observations.

1. The plain, literal, and common signification of the word is to immerse, overwhelm, dip, or to plunge all over.

2. There appears to be no evidence that it is ever used, so much as once, in any part of the Bible, to signify the application of water in any other sense. Even in those passages where I have, in time past, supposed that the meaning might be, and probably was *washing*, without immersion, the sense appears to be, putting into water or immersion, and not what we commonly understand by the word washing. Of this you may be convinced, by considering the treatment to which the Jews were accustomed with respect to those vessels which were ceremonially unclean. They were to baptize them, or to put them into water, as you may see, Levit. xi, 32: "And upon whatsoever any of them, when they are dead, doth fall, it shall be unclean; whether it be any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack; *whatsoever vessel* it be, wherein any work is done, it must be *put into water*, and it shall be unclean until the even; so it shall be cleansed."

2. I will observe to you, that it would, most visibly, be a reflection upon the Great Teacher who came from God, to suppose that he should, when appointing a positive institution, use words aside from their plain and commonly received sense, that too without giving any intimation of his using the words in any sense differing from the common, especially when he was setting up a new institution, about which his most faithful followers could, in all succeeding generations, know nothing but from the words used in and about the institution. Does not all this appear plain and reasonable?

Now the Bible, in the plain, literal and common sense

of the words which it uses, says, the apostles dipt, plunged, or immersed, all such as they admitted to baptism. You will judge for yourselves whether the apostles practised thus, or whether they did not.

4. The practice of the apostles is farther illustrated and confirmed by what Paul tells the Roman and Colossian christians, with respect to what took place when they received the ordinance of baptism. He says to the former, "We are buried with him by baptism into death:" To the other he says, "Buried with him *in* baptism." Paul speaks of the matter as a thing perfectly understood by christians in his time, and used it as an argument to promote their weanedness from the world, and growth in sanctification. But have not you either passed over these and similar passages, without noticing them, or considered them rather hard to be understood? But how easy is it to understand them, provided the apostles practised as the scriptures say they did! I still leave it with you to determine for yourselves, how the apostles practised.

This is the best evidence which the nature of the subject admits. This matter, the apostles' practice, was transacted many ages since. We have the testimony of the scriptures as to what it was; this is evidence enough: however we shall occasionally add the testimony of men.

We shall now attend to the practice of the church, and discover, if we can, how it was for ages after the apostles. The best evidence which this part of my subject admits is that of human testimony*. I by no means rest the merits of the cause on this evidence. At the same time, it may weaken the prejudices of some, and be a mean of confirming others in the belief of the truth.

It appears so plain a case, that we can hardly refuse assent to it, that as the church hath, for a series of ages, practised, so have they believed. When we shall see what their practice hath been, we shall the more easily concede that their belief hath been similar.

* Christ's promise to his apostles, to their successors, and to the church, may assure us, that the ordinance of baptism, by which his people should be distinguished from the world, would ever continue. Therefore could we know what the church hath always practised, especially that part of it which hath been most separate from the world, then their practice would afford a strong argument in favour of what the institution intended.

What is now before us is to produce and to receive evidence relative to the practice of the primitive church. It is the following:—

1. This evidence consists in the united testimony of both those who practised the administration of the ordinance by immersion, and those who used sprinkling, and called it baptizing.

Mosheim, a very noted church historian, and not very friendly to the baptists, bears direct testimony that John, Christ's forerunner, and the church, in the first ages of christianity, practised immersion as the mode of baptizing. The following you may take as a sample of his evidence. "The exhortations of this respectable messenger (John) were not without effect, and those who, moved by his solemn admonition, had formed the resolution of correcting their evil dispositions, and amending their lives, were initiated into the kingdom of the Redeemer by the ceremony of immersion or baptism*."

Speaking of the church in the second century, he says, "The persons that were to be baptized, after they had repeated the creed, confessed and renounced their sins, and particularly the devil, in his pompous allurements, were immersed under water, and received into Christ's kingdom, by a solemn invocation of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, according to the *express command* of our blessed Lord†."

The doctor, speaking of some inferior sects of the seventeenth century, and particularly of a sect called Collegians, says, "Those adult persons, that desire to be baptized, receive the sacrament of baptism, according to the ancient and primitive manner of celebrating that institution, even by *immersion*‡."

Mr. Bailey, in his Etymological English Dictionary, says, "In ancient times, this (baptism) being performed by immersion, the persons so initiated went into a river, &c. and were plunged."

John Calvin, in his *Institutions*, book IV. chap. xv.

* Century I. chap. iii. sect. 3.
† Century II. Part ii. chap. v. sect. 12.
‡ Vol. v. p. 488. American Edition.

sec. 19, says, "It is certain that the manner of dipping was used of the old church."

Here are three substantial witnesses. These might be sufficient, seeing there is not one to be found who will, or dares, give direct and positive testimony against the truth of what these affirm. But since there are an host who stand ready to give in their testimony, even against their own practice, we will hear what two more of them will testify, relative to the important cause now on trial.

These two shall be Doctor Cave and the famous Mr. Baxter.

Dr. Cave, a great searcher into antiquity, says, "That the party baptized was wholly immersed, or put under water, which was the *common*, *constant*, and *universal* custom of those times, whereby they did significantly express the great end and effects of baptism, representing Christ's death, burial and resurrection, and, in conformity thereto, our dying unto sin, the destruction of its power, and our resurrection to a new course of life*," &c.

Most remarkable is the testimony which Mr. Baxter gives to this truth in the following words: "It is commonly confessed by us to the baptists (as our commentators declare) that in the apostles' time, the baptized were dipped over head in water, and this signifieth their profession both of believing the burial and resurrection of Christ, and of their own dying unto sin, and living, or rising again to newness of life, or being buried and risen again with Christ, as the apostle expoundeth baptism, Col. ii. 12 and Rom iv. 6. And though (saith he) we have thought it lawful to disuse the manner of dipping; and to use less water, yet we presume not to change the use and signification of it; so then he that signally professes to die and rise again in baptism with Christ, doth *signally* profess *saving faith* and *repentance*; but this do all they that are baptized according to the apostolic practice†."

As these witnesses testify, so do all learned and pious men who have critically attended to this subject, and afterwards given in any direct and positive evidence upon the matter.

2. The evidence, as to the practice of the primitive church, consists in the testimony of men to this truth,

* Ten Letters. † Ten Letters.

that the church did, for thirteen hundred years, practise immerson, some extreme cases excepted.

The only evidence which I purpose to give in support of this, for the present, is the testimony of the author of *Ten Letters* to bishop Hoadly upon the mode and subjects of baptism, and the confession of Dr. Lathrop that it was even so.

The author of the *Letters* asserts that this was the practice of the church for thirteen hundred years after the commencement of the christian æra. Dr. Lathrop assents that this was the fact; as you may see by reading his four sermons on baptism, where he gives these letters a particular attention, and is supposed to assent, where he makes no objection.

3. All the churches in Europe, Asia and Africa, ever have done, and do now, practice immersion, save those who are now, or have been under the jurisdiction of the pontiffs of Rome.

The same witnesses who bore their testimony to the last particular, give in their evidence in support of this, and in the same way; the one asserting the fact, the other assenting that it is even so.

4. The very reasons which have been given, and which are still given, to justify the contrary practice, are a plain confession that immersion, or burying the subjects under water, was the practice of the apostles and primitive church in the ordinance of baptism, and what Christ commanded to by done.

The reasons which are alledged why sprinklingmay be substituted for immersion, are, the want of health, in some instances where they suppose baptism to be necessary; the weakness of constitution with respect to some, and the coldness of climate with respect to many, and as to all in northern climates in the wintry season. Here is a silent acknowledgment, that it is not the institution, that it is not the permission of Christ, but mere accidental and local circumstances, which make it lawful to lay by the command of Christ, and to receive in its stead the precepts and commandments of men.

Mr. Bailey says, in his Dictionary, that baptism was performed in the eastern and warmer countries by dip-

ping the persons all over, but in process of time, in the western and colder countries, sprinkling was substituted in the place of dipping.

Dr. Lathrop, in his Sermons, implicitly confesses the following extracts to be both true and genuine.

Mr. Baxter, in his *Paraphrase on the New Testament*, observes on Matth. iii. 6, "We grant that baptism then was by washing the whole body; and did not the difference of our cold country, as to that hot one, teach us to remember, 'I will have mercy and not sacrifice,' it should be so here."

The author of the *Letters to Bishop Hoadly*, in the twenty-third page, writes thus: "Mr. Baxter, we have already seen, excuses the matter by the coldness of our climate. Calvin, the celebrated reformer of Geneva, observes in his Exposition of Acts viii. 38, 'We see here what was the baptismal rite among the ancients, for they plunged the whole body in the water.' Now it is the custom for the minister to sprinkle only the body, or head, and he too excuses this sprinkling, but how I cannot well recollect, not having his book at hand."

Bishop Burnet, though he thus describes the primitive baptism, "With no other garments but that might serve to cover nature, they at first laid them down, as a man is laid in the grave, and then they said these words, I baptize or wash thee, in the name, &c. Then they raised them up again, and clean garments were put upon them; from whence came the phrases of being baptized into Christ's death, of being buried with him by baptism into death, of our being risen with Christ, and of our putting on the Lord Jesus Christ; of putting off the old man, and putting on the new:" And though he justly observes, that sacraments are positive precepts, which are to be measured only by the institution, in which there is not room left for us to carry them any farther; yet, forgetting his own measure of the institution, viz. the party baptized was laid down in the water, as a man is laid in the grave, he says, "The danger in cold climates may be a very good reason for changing the form of baptism to sprinkling*."

I propose for the present, to note but one quotation

* Burnet's Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles.

more, and that shall be in the words of Dr. Wall, as quoted in the *Letters*. The doctor, in giving the reasons why, in queen Elizabeth's reign, the custom of dipping was laid aside, observes, 'it being allowed to weak children to be baptized by effusion, many sound ladies and gentlemen first, and then, by degrees, the common people would obtain the favour of the priests to have their children pass for weak children, too tender to endure dipping in the water* ' Now

5. It may be easy for you to gather what is the outside and visible part of the ordinance of baptism.

It is to immerse proper subjects in water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. This is the outward and visible part of baptism, the scriptures being judge; this literal and plain meaning of the command being judge; the practice of the apostles being judge; the practice of the church, for more than a thousand years, being judge; and even if we appeal to those who refuse to practise thus, they add their testimony, that this is what was commanded. They pretend not to say that any new command hath been given, or that the old one hath ever been changed. What shall we say to these things!

I conclude, by submitting a question, and a few inferences, for your consideration.

The question is, If immersion be from heaven, and sprinkling from men, by what authority do we continue the practice? The inferences are—

1. We, who call ourselves pædobaptists, are as a house divided against itself. To say the least, we appear thus. Our champions will look us in the face, and assure us, that the baptists have plain scripture for their mode, and yet we have a right to choose on the score of convenience, &c. what mode is pleasing to us. Thus say Calvin, Hoadly, Owen and others; whilst in their practice they have been, in this instance, like the servant who knew but did not his lord's will. These good men have confessed rather too much for the credit of their practice, and our comfort while copying it. Many, however, have risen up in defence of our father's practice and ours. They invent many inge-

* Vol. II. p. 30. 1 Ed.

nious hypotheses to prove it from heaven, but not one affords a solid conclusion, which shows it to be so.

2. According to the light which for the present appears, we cannot but conclude that our definitions of baptism and to baptize, are scriptural, accurate and just. If we will do the will of God, we must practice what he commands.

3. It appears that it is not left with us to choose what mode we will practise in administering or in receiving the ordinance of baptism; for we find but one mode to it; and we must practice this, or none. We may sprinkle a person in the name of the Father, &c. and we may wash the face, or any part of a person, in the same sacred name; but it is not possible to baptize a person in this way. For sprinkling, or any small, partial washing, never was, is not now, nor ever will be, what the scriptures mean by christian baptism.

4. That a person must be greatly unacquainted with the plain, literal, scripture account of baptism, or extremely prejudiced, not to say perverse, to affirm, that the bible says nothing about immersion, or burying in water, for baptizing. For it speaks of this mode and no other, in the application of water as a gospel ordinance.

The baptists have for their mode the broad *basis* of *scripture*, antiquity, and the uninterrupted, and somewhat universal practice of the church.

5. It appears that for well informed pædobaptists to oppose the baptists, as to their mode of baptizing, is very great wickedness. For the baptists have the advantage of plain and express scripture on their side, and the learned, critical, and candid pædobaptists know it.

Ignorance is the best and only excuse which we can make for ourselves for any opposition which we have made against the ancient and primitive mode which the baptists have practised in the administration of the ordinance. Our contention, in this matter, hath not been against the baptists merely, but it hath been against their Lord and ours.

Dr. Lathrop appears generally to grant the truth, that immersion is scripture baptism, and only contends that sprinkling be also allowed; which every candid mind would readily do, were there one text of scripture to support it.

6 No true christian, if he knew what he did, would ever make light of immersion, which the Lord commands, and the baptists practise, as the mode of baptizing, or more strictly, as baptism itself.

SERMON IV.

MATTHEW xxviii. 19, 20.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. *Amen*

WHILST discoursing to you upon these words, I have, as I suppose, proved to you what is the outward and visible part of baptism. You have, to appearance, given a serious and solemn attention, and, I hope, a candid one, to what hath been said.

All which I ask of you in this matter is, that you, in the spirit of meekness, hear the whole, and then judge and practise, in such a manner, as you cannot refuse to do, without doing violence to your reason, and without disobedience to the command of Heaven.

Some of you may be afraid of discord; but whence, I pray you, will discord arise among brethren? Will a candid, prayerful and self-denying attention to truth cause this feared discord? Hath truth a tendency to produce discord among the faithful followers of the Lamb of God? I know that once, when Christ preached the doctrines of the cross, multitudes of professing disciples went back, and followed no more with him. I hope it will not be thus with any of you. But, my brethren, however it may be with any of you, one thing is clear—I ought. I must declare to you, so fast as I profitably can, all those truths of God, which appear necessary to build you up in sound faith and holy practice.

As I have said before, so say I unto you again, that all which I ask of you is, to give truth a candid hearing, and yield your assent when facts are plainly proved.

Nothing should, by me, be thought too much to be done, to clear away from your minds the darkness of prejudice, together with an erroneous belief and practice which you may have imbibed, in part, by my means. I shall, therefore, in this discourse, after having attended to the purport, end, or design of baptism, answer some objections, which may for the present obstruct the force of truth.

Before we proceed to the particular business of this discourse, you will, if you please, attend for a minute to a few questions and their answers.

1. Is it not a plain case, that it is my duty to deliver to you the whole counsel of God, according to the best light it may please him to afford me?

2. Is it not equally plain, that your duty is to yield, not to me, but to the truths which I deliver, an obedient ear?

3. Should you, from an uncandid and prejudiced mind, refuse to be converted by the truth, will the fault be mine?

4. Should I exhibit full evidence, as to the subject on hand, and exhibit that evidence clearly too, or should it be that I have done this, and yet great difficulties arise, will you be justified should you lay the blame to me?

5. Should I teach you the truth, and produce all the evidence which you can ask for, and you should, all, like faithful christians, believe it, where or whence will arise any difficulty among us? Should any of you refuse to believe, will you charge your difficulties to my account?

6. Are not all of you determined that you will hear candidly, and believe upon evidence?

You will please to give a christian and judicious answer to each of these questions, and let your practice be conformed with the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Having laid before you the principal part of the facts and evidence which I intended, as to the visible and outward part of baptism, now—

Lastly, The purport, end, or design of the baptismal institution, may call for some attention.

The purport, end, or design of this christian ordinance or institution appears to be—

1. For a dividing line between the kingdom of our Lord, and the kingdoms of this world.

John was Christ's forerunner; he was sent before his face to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; and to make ready a people prepared for the Lord*; and that Christ should be made manifest to Israel, therefore, says John, am I come baptizing with water†. John's mission comprehended a double purpose, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord, and to manifest him unto Israel. The people which he instrumentally made ready, and prepared to receive the Lord, he baptized; and it appears from his rejecting many of the Pharisees and Sadducees, that he intentionally baptized none other‡. The whole discourse which he had with them, Matth. iii, 7 to 12, is good evidence that he admitted none to baptism but such as brought forth visible fruits of repentance. Such persons he admitted among that people which he was making ready for the Lord. This people were, when prepared, to compose that kingdom, or the beginning of that kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, and which is an everlasting kingdom, which shall stand for ever: Daniel ii. 44. and vii. 27. This kingdom Christ calls the kingdom of Heaven, and says it is not of this world.

It appears to be this kingdom which was now at hand, almost ready to be set up, of which Christ speaks to Nicodemus, when he says, John iii. 5. Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

All this does, for substance, meet the sentiment of baptists and pædobaptists on this subject. Both suppose, that none can belong to this kingdom without being born of water, or baptized. Both suppose that men may professedly, or visibly, belong to this kingdom, without being born of the Spirit: but, perhaps, neither the baptists nor pædobaptists would say, that any do, strictly speaking, belong to this kingdom, except they have been born of water and of the Spirit. Our Lord saith, Verily, verily, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven. If a man cannot enter into this kingdom but in this way, he cannot belong to it in any other.

* Luke i. 17. † John i. 31. ‡ Matt. iii. 7.

Both sides grant, that baptism, or to be born of water, is the only way of admittance into this kingdom. They are not so well agreed as to what it is to be born of water, whether it be to be sprinkled, washed, or immersed. Concerning this matter you must judge for yourselves.

This being a given point, that the design of baptism is, that it should be for a dividing line between that kingdom, which the God of Heaven was to set up in the latter day, and this world, I would suggest for your consideration: Which draws the line of separation most clearly between this kingdom and all other kingdoms on earth, to enter it by being sprinkled; or by being visibly and actually buried in water, and rising as it were from the dead, to join this kingdom?

I will also suggest one thing more for your consideration: Which hath the most direct and natural tendency to cause Christ's kingdom to appear to be, as it really is, not of this world? To have almost all admitted into it, in infancy, and so in unbelief, and all by sprinkling, or by a little water put upon the face, and the greater part of them living in open wickedness, or manifest unbelief, and unnoticed by the church to which they are supposed to belong; or, to have none admitted but professed believers, and these admitted in a way which significantly says, that they turn their backs upon the world; yea, that they are dead to the world, and risen with Christ? I only suggest this for your consideration. I hope to attend it in its place, but not to-day.

2. The purport, end, or design of baptism, appears to be for a manifestation, that the subjects of it have forsaken all, yes, their own lives, for Christ's sake and the gospel.

How can this be more visibly manifested than by being buried with him in baptism? How can a man more visibly forsake all, than he does when buried? How can any one more manifestly forsake his own life for another, than by voluntarily submitting himself into the hands of another to be buried alive?

Is not this agreeable to what Christ saith. Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple?

3. It appears to be for a representation of our being washed from our sins in the blood of the Lamb.

John, the revelator, saith, speaking of Jesus Christ the faithful witness, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." This is a figurative expression, showing at once the procuring cause, the blood of Christ, and the gracious effect, our souls purged from dead works to serve the living God. Can any natural sign represent this more fully, than does baptism, in which our bodies are washed with pure water?

4. The purport, end, or design of this christian ordinance, appears to be for the promotion of piety in individuals, and purity in the church.

What can have a stronger tendency to move the heart of a christian to piety and weanedness from the world, than has the institution of baptism? Seeing, at every remembrance of it, he is put in mind how Christ died for sin, and how every one who hath believed and been baptized, has by the ordinance signally died to sin, been buried from the world, and raised again to newness of life. Hath not this ordinance also an equally strong tendency to preserve the purity of the church, should it be administered, as we have proved it ought to be, by immersion only; and should another thing be found to be true, that visible believers only should be admitted to it, what a world of unbelievers would this shut out of the church! How differently would the professed church of Jesus Christ appear from what it now does?

If my information be correct, every natural born subject of the crown of England is, according to the laws of their national church, to be baptized, and immediately considered as a member of the church. This is, indeed, consistent, if all the parents have, in any past period, been proselyted to the christian religion, and if baptism have come into the place of circumcision, and to be administered to children and infants, as that was.

Not only so, but probably nine-tenths of the inhabitants of New-England, if not of our nation, belong to the church, according to the professed belief of the pædobaptists. Upon the same principle, I presume that more than three-fourths of all the adults in this and the neigh-

bouring towns belong to the church, and have, if the principle be according to the gospel, a right to require admittance to the Lord's supper, and baptism for their children. Then, upon the same principle, would their children be members of the church, and entitled to all the privileges of God's house, as they come to years, and nothing short of gross immorality could justify their exclusion. Does this look as though Christ's kingdom were not of this world?

5. The purport, end, or design of baptism, appears to be well described by Dr. Goodwin, in the following words: "The eminent thing signified and represented in baptism, is not singly the blood of Christ, as it washes us from our sins, but there is a further representation therein of Christ's death, burial and resurrection, in the baptized: and this is not in a bare conformity to Christ, but is a representation of a communion with Christ in his death and resurrection; therefore it is said, We are buried with him in baptism, and wherein we are risen with him, &c. And moreover, more it is that the answer of a good conscience, which is made the inward effect of this ordinance, 1 Peter iii. 21, is there also attributed to Christ's resurrection, as the things signified and represented in baptism; and as the cause of that answer of a good conscience, even baptism doth now save us, as it is a figure of salvation by Christ."

6. The purport, end, or design of the ordinance, appears to be to point out, or shadow forth, the forgiveness or remission of sins, and the being cleansed from them. Hence the propriety of scripture expressions, which are like the following: The baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, Mark i. 4. Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, Acts xxii. 16. Here it is worthy of the critical reader's notice, that the word translated *wash away* is *apolousai*, which signifies to wash clean, or to wash out a stain, as well as to wash away. It is also worthy to be observed, that the word *louo*, whence this is derived, is the only word, or theme, save *baptizo*, which, in the New Testament, signified to wash the body. This being well considered, it cannot be doubted but baptism is a most significant representation of the remission of sin, or cleansing from it.

Lastly, The purport, end, and design of the ordinance of baptism appears to be, for an open and manifest declaration that those who receive it, do heartily, and of a ready mind, put on Christ, enter into his service, receive him to be their Prophet, Priest and King, and covenant to be for him, and for him only. Accordingly it is said, As many as were baptized into Christ, have put on Christ: they have put on his name, his self-denying profession, his suffering, despised, but glorious cause.

Is the purport, end, and design of baptism as hath been now stated, then the mode is immersion; and those who change the *ordinance* from *dipping* to *sprinkling*, and apply it to unbelievers, *pervert* the *ordinance*, lose its import, and make it quite another thing. This we have, for years, ignorantly done.

We will now attend to the arguments which the late Rev. John Cleaveland hath left us in support of *sprinkling*, as being authentic baptism. This Mr. Cleaveland was, and I believe justly too, esteemed as one of the most pious and faithful servants of Christ. Whilst I was favoured with a personal acquaintance with him, he stood very high in my estimation, for his unaffected piety and fervent simplicity, as the preacher of the everlasting gospel. I still retain the same opinion of the good man. But great and good men are not always wise. In any instance where their wisdom hath failed them, we should be careful how we follow. The Bereans would not take Paul for a guide, without first bringing him to the standard of divine truth. The Bereans were justified. Should we treat Mr. C. in the same way, he could not, and I am inclined to think he would not, though he were living, condemn us. I might let his works and arguments in support of sprinkling sleep, were it not that some of you, my people, and perhaps others, may by them, in one particular, be kept from beholding Christ, as in an open glass.

The good man's object was, to prove that baptism by sprinkling is authentic, or is scriptural; or that sprinkling is baptism.

I will now lay before you his supposed strong arguments, by which he supports the validity of sprinkling

for baptizing. After stating the principles of the baptists, as to the ordinance now considering, his

1st Argument is, "Their learned men know that the word *baptizo* in Luke xi. 38, and *baptismous* in Mark vii. 2—5, are used to signify the same as *nipto* is, i. e. proper washing, or making clean by the application of water, in cases that do not necessarily require dipping as the mode of washing." The answer to this is: That neither the learned men among the baptists, nor the learned among any other class of men, know any such thing. Besides, *baptisthe* in Luke, and *baptismous* in Mark, have reference to, and mean, a ceremonial, a religious, or rather, as may be more properly called in these instances, a superstitious washing. What is meant by a ceremonial washing, you may see by looking into the ceremonial law: Levit. xi. 32, and in Numb. xix. 19, where you will find that this ceremonial washing was, to put into water, or to bathe one's flesh in water. You hence see that these two passages, with which Mr. Cleaveland lays the foundation of his support of sprinkling for baptism, utterly fail him, and come in as auxiliaries to confirm immersion as the only scripture baptism. I will not say that *nipto* is never used to signify ceremonial washing, and so intend the washing, or putting the hands into water *(pugme)*, with abundance of exactness, as Dr. Doddridge expounds it; or up to the elbows, as E'Enfant renders it. But one thing is evident to all who will examine the texts, and compare them with the ceremonial washings of the ceremonial law, in conformity with which the Jewish doctors meant to have their traditional ceremonies, that *baptizo* and *baptismous* are not used in the sense in which *nipto* generally is. In every point of view, Mr. Cleaveland's texts utterly fail him, and go to destroy the custom or tradition he brought them to support. Besides, I do not find that *baptizo* is used, in any place, for washing the hands, or for washing or dipping a part of the body, or any other thing. Mr. Cleaveland's

2d Argument is built upon Hebrews ix. 10, where the apostle speaks of *(diaphorois baptismois)* divers washings. Here, where the apostle is speaking of divers ceremonial washings, or bathings, Mr. Cleaveland, without the

least possible evidence, concludes the apostle means divers sprinklings.

The same answer which was given to the first argument belongs to this, as Mr. Cleaveland has produced no evidence, that *(baptismois)* washings, or bathings, means sprinklings, save that in the 13th and 21st verses. The apostle makes use of the word sprinkle, when speaking of the application of blood, and speaking of the unclean, says, they are *runtized*, and add almost all things are by the law purged, *catherized*, not *baptized*, with blood. It is not a little surprizing that a man of Mr. C's good sense should say, and that Dr. Lathrop, and other men of erudition, should follow him, in saying, these different sprinklings, in the 13th and 21st verses, refer to *baptismois*, when, had they looked three words farther, they would have found them to be, *kai dikaiomasi sarkos*, the literal English of which is, "The ordinance of God concerning the ceremonial rites of bloody sacrifices!" Had they looked into their Greek Testaments, they might, with ease, have seen that their argument would not bear examination. Surely, had these gentlemen had the right of the question, they never would have compelled the apostle to explain by the sprinkling of blood, what he meant by bathings or washings with water. Perhaps a more forced exposition of scripture is seldom heard. Besides, the apostle told them, by placing what is translated carnal ordinance, between divers washings in the 10th, and sprinkling in the 13th and 21st verses, that he intended no such thing as they supposed. If I mistake not, Mr. C's

3d Argument is an attempt to prove that *bapto* and *baptizo* are used to signify something more than to dip, put into water, &c. When the good man brought forward his argument he forgot—&c.—which belongs to his quotation from Dr. Gale, and which includes immersion and overwhelming, and which comprises the whole which Mr. C. has proved that *baptizo* signifies. But, waving his forgetfulness, we will attend to what he says. All which he appears to do here is, to show that *bapto* or *baptizo* are used wash, dip, and wet with sprinkling the dew from heaven, and to overwhelm. That is, *bapto* signifies to

dip, put into water, wet with the dew of heaven, &c. and *baptizo* signifies to dip, put into water, and overwhelm. What is the consequence? According to Mr. C. it is this: Because *bapto* is sometimes used to signify one's being wet with the distilling dew of heaven, &c. therefore *baptizo* signifies the same thing; because *bapto* signifies in one place to wash without dipping, therefore *baptizo* signifies to wash without dipping; and because *bapto* is sometimes used to signify to colour, or stain, by aspersion or the like, therefore *baptizo* is used in the same sense; therefore sprinkling is authentic baptism What evidence, I pray you, my hearers, is there in all this? Yes, what show or appearance of evidence is there in all this? Would ten thousand such arguments afford you the least conviction, or gain your assent, where you had a cent to lose?

Every person of sense, who is acquainted with the Greek, would, generally speaking, allow Mr. C's premise, that *bapto*, in different places, signifies the application of water in different ways; and that *baptizo* sometimes signifies overwhelming. But no person, who understands the matter, will allow his conclusion, for it hath no connection with the premises.

His argument, in plain English, is this: The verb to wet, sometimes signifies to sprinkle, as in a heavy dew we say it sprinkles or wets; the verb to overwhelm sometimes signifies to cover all over with water, as is the beach by the flowing of the tide. Of consequence, to overwhelm is to sprinkle; therefore to sprinkle is authentic overwhelming, or baptism. The fallacy of this argument is easily detected, and with the same ease may any one who knows the different significations of *bapto* and *baptizo*, uncover the fallacy and complete inconclusiveness of Mr. C's argument.

The plain truth is, he hath done his side a disservice, for by searching he hath found, and implicity acknowledges, though not intentionally, and (I suppose) without knowing it, that no instance can be found where *baptizo* signifieth the application of water by sprinkling, or any other way, which does not imply overwhelming, or wash-

ing, that is, a ceremonial washing, which is bathing, or putting into water. But—

4 There is another argument upon which Mr. Cleaveland chiefly dwells, and upon which he appears greatly to rest the defence of his whole cause. It is his strong hold against immersion, and for sprinkling; and it is this: Baptism with water, or baptism as a christian ordinance, is to signify Christ's baptizing with the Holy Ghost. I have no where found that he hath proved that this is the great and principal thing which baptism signifies; nor do I by any means obtain conviction that the mode of baptizing is to be determined, with certainty, from this particular thing, even should it be granted that one important design of baptism is to signify Christ's baptizing with the Holy Ghost. But, as Mr. C. seems to depend more upon the strength of this argument than he does upon the strength of any other, we will grant, for the present, that baptism with water was appointed particularly, if not mainly, to set forth the mode in which Christ baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

Now the great question is, In what manner, or mode, by sprinkling or overwhelming, did Christ Jesus baptize with the Holy Ghost? Mr. C. in his treatise, replies abundantly, by sprinkling, certainly. We will put this subject to the test, by instancing the most remarkable season which ever was, in which Christ, in a most remarkable, public, and astonishing degree, was baptizing with the Holy Ghost. I presume, were Mr. C. now alive, he could not, with any propriety, object against taking as a sample for the whole, the most remarkable instance which ever hath been, and, perhaps, which ever will be, exhibited of Christ's baptizing with the Holy Ghost. I am willing to submit the strong argument of Mr. C. to this great sample of Christ's baptizing with the Holy Ghost. Are not all you, my hearers, willing to leave the weight of his argument to such a decision? I am persuaded, you all say, Yes.

We will, then, bring his argument to the proposed test. The instance which we will take, for surely it is the most astonishing one, is that which Christ foretold, as related, Acts i. 5. "John truly baptized with water, but ye

shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence." The accomplishment of this prediction and promise we have related in the four first verses of the next chapter. It is thus:—When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all, with one accord, in one place. And suddenly there was a sound from heaven, as of a rushing of mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.

Here was, truly, a wonderful instance of Christ's baptizing with the Holy Ghost.

Here, 1. All the house was filled with the sound, wind, or Spirit from heaven. 2. Cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 3. They were all filled with the Holy Ghost.

We here see that they were all overwhelmed, for all the house, where they were sitting, was filled, and not only were they all overwhelmed, but they were also filled.

It is left with you to determine, what becomes of Mr. C's argument, upon which he lays so much stress, and of which he speaks with so much confidence, and not unfrequently with an air of triumph. Is there a word about sprinkling in any part of it? or is there any thing which looks like it? Does it not look considerably like immersion, or overwhelming? At least, does it not favour immersion, or overwhelming, as much as it does sprinkling? If so, then it proves nothing for sprinkling. It is left with you to determine which side it favours.

It is possible, however, that some of you may suppose that Mr. C. might intend *that* baptism, if it may be so called, which the Holy Ghost ministers, when it creates the soul anew. To this supposition, I will just observe, "the wind bloweth (saith Christ) where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell *whence* it *cometh*, or *whither* it *goeth*; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Would it not be extreme folly to suppose that water baptism represents the operations of the Spirit, when none can know whence it cometh, or whither it goeth? It may represent the effect of the Spirit's operations, and it is called, a being born, not sprinkled of the Spirit.

5. In reading Mr. C's defence of sprinkling, as being authentic baptism, I noticed but one more distinct argument, and it is this :

" *Nipto*, *baptizo*, *louo*, *brecho*, *pluno*, or *apepluno*, all signify to wash." The conclusion which he draws from this is, in short, the following: To baptize is not to immerse, but to sprinkle. I see no connection between his premise and conclusion. Besides, Mr. C tells us, page 80, that the Jews, by adhering to the tradition of the elders, observed the washing of hands, and divers other things, as a religious ceremony. Now, if all the words, which Mr. C. mentions, signify to wash, and yet some of them signify common washing, and another, and that *baptizo* signifies ceremonial washing, and that be to put into water, as is the case, what does his argument prove ? It proves just nothing to his point. Had he proved, what he hath not even attempted, that they all signify the same kind of washing, and that the washing signified was not immersion, but sprinkling only, then his conclusion would have followed, that sprinkling is baptism.

If the above arguments will not support Mr. C's theory, it must all come down, for they are the substance, if not all the arguments, which he hath adduced, and I presume better cannot be found.

I thought to have taken Dr. Lathrop's arguments upon the same subject into consideration : but upon re-examining them I find there is no material dissimilarity between his and Mr. C's ; they therefore both stand or fall together. A word or two however may be here added.

Dr. Lathrop assures us that Cyprian, who wrote within about one hundred and fifty years of the apostles, speaking of sprinkling says, " In the sacrament of salvation (that is baptism), when *necessity compels*, the shortest ways of transacting divine matters do, by God's grace, confer the whole benefit." The doctor adds " The ancients *practised immersion**."

By this quotation of the doctor's from Cyprian, and confession of his own, being put together, it appears, at once, that all his preceding arguments are erroneous. For Cyprian does not intimate that sprinkling was from

* Pages 24, 25.

heaven, but says it was from necessity. Besides, his calling baptism the sacrament of salvation, shows us the error, whence the necessity of sprinkling came, namely, a belief that the ordinance of baptism was necessary to salvation. This being the case, and it also being true, as the doctor acknowledges, that the ancients practised immersion, save when necessity compelled, as they erroneously supposed, the consequence is fairly this, that immersion is from heaven, the ancients being judges; and that sprinkling is from men, from necessity, or rather from error.

I thought to have added no more upon the doctor's mode of christian baptism. However, one argument ought to be taken out of his hands, lest it misguide some of his readers. He tells us that *baptizo*, in Mark vii, and Luke xi, is used to signify the application of water to the hands. The only answer needed is, it is not thus said in Mark or Luke, or in any other part of the Bible. When the doctor shall re-examine the passages, he will probably see the mistake.

Will gentlemen, and christians too, forever contend against *immersion*, the institution of heaven, and for sprinkling, which has nothing but *error* and *convenience* for its support.

SERMON V.

MATTHEW xxviii. 19, 20.

Go ye, therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. *Amen.*

I HAVE confidence in you, brethren, that ye will keep the ordinances, as I shall deliver them to you, and prove them to be from the word of the Lord.

One thing I would still know of you, my brethren, whether you, like the more noble Bereans, will receive the word with readiness, searching the scriptures daily, that you may know the truth of what you hear.

You will bear in mind, that whosoever loveth father or mother, house or lands, wife or children, more than Christ, is not worthy of him. If, through affection for any of these, you should refuse to obey Christ, it will be too evident that you love them more than you do him, and so are not worthy of him.

Should you love any erroneous belief and practice more than you do the truths of Christ, you will, so far as you manifest it, prove that you are not worthy of him.

Should you despise me for delivering and vindicating the truths of Christ to you, you will, at the same time, despise him. You will therefore give good heed to what you say, and to what you do, in this matter; for if it be of God it will stand, and none can overthrow it. It is hoped none of you will be found fighting against God.

This discourse may contain a review of what we have passed over, together with some application. In my first discourse to you on the subject, which we have still before us, the following are the principal things to which we attended:—

I. I proposed a number of plain truths, considered to be as first principles for your attention.

1. Baptism is a positive institution, about which we can know nothing as to its being a christian ordinance, but from Christ, and those inspired by his Spirit, have taught us

2. All which we are required to believe and practise, with respect to the christian ordinance of baptism, is declared to us by Jesus Christ, and by his forerunner and apostles.

3. When Jesus Christ first instituted the ordinance of baptism, he no doubt delivered his mind so clearly and fully upon the subject, that his disciples and immediate followers understood and practised as he would have them.

4. Every thing which hath, by the precepts and commandments of men, been added since, is aside from the ordinance, and makes no part of it.

5. No man, or body of men, hath any more authority to add to, or diminish from, this ordinance, than they have to institute a new one and call it Christ's.

6. Whenever, and wherever, the ordinance of baptism is so changed, as to lose the intent of the institution, then and there the ordinance is lost, and becomes no christian ordinance at all.

II. I defined for your information a number of words which appertain to the ordinance of baptism.

We found all these to be just as we might expect to have found them, provided immersion be baptism, or the mode in which it is administered.

Baptisterion, a place in which to wash the body. *Baptism*, immersion, or dipping one all over in water. *Baptizo* signifies to dip, or wash, the body all over in water. *Louo* (a word several times used in reference to, or signifying the same as baptism) is, to wash, to rinse, to bathe, &c. Then,

III. I set before you all the texts in the New Testament which relate either to the baptism of John, or to that of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the next place, I propose for your meditation the passages of scripture where washing is mentioned, and the Greek words which are used. I then called your attention to those passages in which sprinkling is mentioned, and to the Greek words which are made use of. *Lastly*, I read to you those scriptures where to dip is mentioned, and also the Greek words which are rendered to dip.

In not one of the places, where the ordinance of baptism is brought to view, do we find one word about sprinkling, or any thing which looks like it. In every place, where to dip is mentioned, we find a near relation to baptism; every word which is used coming from the same *root* or theme, from which *baptizo* comes.

As to the word *wash*, we find no relation between the words which signify to wash, and those which signify to baptize, save in those few instances where the meaning is to wash the body, or put into water, or wash a thing all over. When we come to the Greek words which signify to sprinkle, we find no similarity or likeness between them and the word to baptize.

In all the places where baptizing is mentioned, not a word is used which looks like sprinkling; where sprinkling is mentioned, there is not a word used which appears like baptism.

In my next discourse I produced my evidence, that my definitions of baptism and to baptize were accurate and just. I dwelt largely upon this evidence; for the merit of the whole subject depends greatly, if not entirely, upon the determinate meaning of the words which our Lord used in the institution of the ordinance, and when speaking of it. When we know the determinate signification of his words, we know what he says, and what we ought to understand by the words which he uses. The evidence which I produced was, in short, the following:—

1. The Greek Lexicon, Butterworth's Concordance, Bailey's and Entick's Dictionaries, bear their united testimony, that the plain, literal and common, if not universal signification of the words *baptism* and *to baptize*, is immersion and to immerse, bury in water, to dip, or to plunge a person all over in water. Here are four learned and positive witnesses to the same thing. Indeed, they give no other signification, save it be to wash, which we have seen intends a ceremonial washing, which is to put into water, or to bathe.

2. I repeated some of the attendant or circumstantial facts, which have relation to the ordinance of baptism. John baptized in the river Jordan. He was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there. The word *babtistery* signifies a place in which to wash the body all over. *Baptism* signifies to dip, to plunge, immerse, or to wash the body all over in water. *Baptizer* signifies one who dips, plunges, or washes the body all over in water. *To baptize* signifies to immerse, plunge under water, or under any other liquid thing, or to dip, or to put into water. To be *baptised* is to be plunged, immersed, or washed all over in water.

These things being true, is it not easy to determine what the ordinance of baptism signifies?

3. The words *baptismos* and *baptizo* have two, and only two translations in the New Testament. These two are *baptism* and *washing*. Where their meaning is washing, or where they are thus translated, it is a ceremonial washing, which is to put into water, or bathe the flesh in water, as you may see, Levit. xi. 32, Numb. xix. 19. When they are translated *baptism*, or *to baptize*, the thing

intended is the baptism of water, of fire, of sufferings, or of the Holy Ghost.

4. I brought forward several noted witnesses, to bear their united testimony, that I had given a just definition of the word *baptizo;* these were, John Calvin, Zanchius, and Dr. Owen.

In the next place I mentioned to you that Paul repeatedly uses the word *louo*, where he means the same thing as where he uses the word *baptizo;* that he uses these words as signifying the same thing. Whereas, *louo* signifies to wash and to bath the body in water, and consequently *baptizo* means the same.

Lastly, I brought forward Pau 's exposition of the word *baptism*, and showed you that he expounds it as being buried with Christ in baptism, or immersion.

In my discourse, which I next preached to you, I produced evidence, that the apostles and primitive christians not only understood the matter as I have described it, but practised accordingly.

In support of the apostles' practice, I observed, that the word *louo*, of determinate signification, which they used to signify their practice, or what was done by them in baptism, determines or fixes their practice to be immersion. I further observe, that they were commanded to practise baptism, or to baptize, as I have described it; and that the scriptures testify, that they thus did; and also that the apostles say, the mode of bap izing in their day was by burying the subjects in baptism.

For witnesses that the primitive church practised immersion, we have Mosheim, Bailey, Calvin, Baxter, and many others, all agreeing in this one point, that the mode of baptizing, or of baptism itself, among the ancients, was immersion. We have also evidence that the church thus practised, for thirteen hundred years, some extreme cases excepted. Moreover we have evidence that all the church, in Europe, in Asia, and in Africa, save that part of it, which is now, hath been, under the bewildering power of the popes, do now, and ever have, practised immersion.

Besides all this, the very reasons which the pædobaptists assign, why they have laid aside immersion, show that sprinkling is not commanded by the Lord, but is taught by the precepts of men.

You see we have an ocean of witnesses and evidence against us; and all, or nighly so, from our own denomination of christians. What a world of evidence might we reasonably expect that the baptists would be able to bring for themselves, and against us and our practice, would we hear them, when our own side bring so much against their own practice, and for the baptists! Besides, this evidence appears to stand in its full force against us, there being no opposite evidence to weaken its force. Indeed we are, in this matter, much like criminals, who plead, at least the leaders of them, guilty to the whole indictment. However, some have made a full plea of not guilty, but in part. At the same time, numbers of them, in their plea, have convicted themselves of being guilty throughout.

In the last discourse, after holding to your view the purport, end, and design of baptism, I examined one of their pleas of not guilty. But what evidence did the good man give of his innocence? Can the largest stretch of charity allow more than this, *he knew not what he did?* Was truth ever brought to such straits as to require to be supported by such arguments?

APPLICATION.

From a review of the whole subject, the following appear to flow as necessary consequences.

1. Whether we allow immersion to be the scripture mode of baptism, and the only one which it requires, or not, one thing is clear, that we have as much evidence of its being so as we could have, on supposition that it were.

The scriptures declare, in various ways, that this is the mode, and mention no other. The scriptures expound themselves to mean immersion, or burying.

We find not a single trace, in all the scriptures, where the ordinance is spoken of, of any thing short of immersion being mentioned.

Good men, who are skilful in the true import of words, have agreed that the plain, literal and accurate meaning of the word to baptize, is to immerse or bury in water,

&c. Nor have any been able to shew that in any part of God's word it hath any opposite meaning or application.

The church of Jesus Christ have, in all ages, understood the matter of baptism as I have explained it. We must, however, except, for the last three or five hundred years, many of those branches of the church, which have been, or are now, under the jurisdiction of the church of Rome. The purport, end and design of baptism, also intimate to us that this is the manner of baptizing.

Indeed, if there be any words in the Greek language by which the Lord of the baptismal institution could have told us what he intended, the words used do this. For there are no two words in the language, or, at least, none which have come to our knowledge, which so literally, so uniformly, and so expressly, signify to immerse, or wash, or bathe the body in water, as do the words *baptizo* and *louo*. Hence, if immersion be baptism, the Lord, if I so say, could not have told us of it in the New Testament, if the words chosen by the Holy Ghost do not afford this information. If baptism be immersion, then the two most suitable words have been chosen to express it; but if sprinkling be baptism, two words which were farther from the point could not have been found. We find no instance, in the Bible, where they are thus used. In short, no two words, which mention the application of water in any way, are farther from the idea of sprinkling, than are those two which are used when baptism is intended. It therefore appears that, whilst we have used sprinkling for baptism, we have departed from the plain and primitive import of the words used, as far as we could without a complete omission of water. None can be at a farther remove from the instituted, scripture baptism, than we have been, without denying it in whole.

2. Error is very insinuating and deceiving. Surely it hath proved thus in the subject of sprinkling.

Cyprian, who wrote within about one hundred and fifty years of the apostles, speaking of sprinkling, says, as quoted by Dr. Lathrop, "In the sacrament of *salvation* (i. e. baptism,) when *necessity compels*, the shortest ways of transacting divine matters, do, by God's grace, confer the whole benefit." Here we see the origin of sprinkling for baptism.

It was an early error in the church, that baptism was necessary to salvation. Hence, when it was judged, that life would be endangered by immersion, the person must either lose his life by baptism, or lose his soul for want of being baptized, or some other mode must be invented. Or, if the sick person was nighly dying, he must be baptized without immersion, or probably lose his soul, before he could be conveyed where the ordinance might be administered. Under these circumstances, man's fruitful invention devised sprinkling as a substitute for baptism. Here is the origin of sprinkling, as the ancients have told us.

In process of time, sound ladies and gentlewomen wished to have sprinkling substituted for baptism in their behalf; afterwards others, till at last, it became a general custom in many of the European nations. In the mean time, the baptists, and many others, objected against the practice, as being contrary from the command of Christ. Hence arose the necessity of defending it, or else have it considered as a departure from the faith. Matters being thus, the invention of many was in full exercise to defend sprinkling, as being of divine origin. A number of ceremonial rites of the Levitical law were pressed into this service; several passages of the New Testament were wrested from their natural meaning to a forced interpretation; and out of the motley mixture were formed what were styled arguments; but such arguments can stand no longer than while prejudice lives to support them.

However, the most disagreeable part is, a good number of very pious and learned men have been carried away in this whirlpool of deception. Their being deceived has deceived others; and we are, or have been, among the deceived.

3. Sprinkling is not from heaven, but of men: this too, if I mistake not, by the fully and fairly implied concession of those, who have written in its defence.

If from heaven, why, in the first place, use it only when necessity compelled? as it was supposed to save souls from hell. If from heaven, why, afterwards, use it in cases of less urgent necessity? If from heaven, why bring in the coldness of the country as an excuse for using it?

If from heaven, why not mentioned in the institution of the ordinance, or in some passage were mention is made of baptism, or in some other place in all the writings of the evangelists and apostles? If from heaven, why not intimated as being so, by those who first introduced it? If sprinkling be from heaven, why so many *inconclusive* arguments in its support? Is the word of God deficient in this particular, and hath it revealed what cannot be supported by it? If from heaven, why not commanded, enjoined, required, or so much as once hinted, as being the mode of a gospel ordinance, in any part of that revelation which we have received from heaven?

4. Another consequence is, that the scripture mode of baptism is immersion, and, for aught we know, the only mode, and necessary to the administration of the ordinance.

This is the plain, literal, scripture sense of baptism; therefore this is the plain, literal, scripture mode. The scriptures mention no other mode, therefore this may be, and is, for aught appears, the only scripture mode.

5. From what we have gone over, one thing appears certain, that Christ never commanded any of his followers to administer any gospel ordinance by sprinkling, and, at the same time, to say, *I baptize*. For to do thus, would be to command them to do *one thing*, and to say that they did *another*.

To *sprinkle* is to *rantize*, which hath no visible connection with baptism. To say, Christ commanded his disciples to rantize, and at the same time to say, we baptize, is what no christian would knowingly be willing to say. This would, if I mistake not, be making Christ the minister of sin. But what I have long, implicitly, though ignorantly done, others may still do.

6. Another consequence is, custom hath great influence upon the human mind. It surely hath upon us; for, even after we have full evidence that sprinkling, for baptism, is not from heaven, but was the offspring of error, and fostered by the dark ages of papistical usurpation, we are hardly persuaded to renounce it. But, my brethren, my expectation is, that after you have searched your Bibles through and through, and find nothing of it there, you will give it up,

Should the Lord enquire of us, why we substitute sprinkling for baptizing, and say unto us, Whence is this substitution, from heaven or of men? Would there not be great reasonings among us what answer to return? Should we say, From heaven; he might reply, How do you prove it? Should we say, Of men; then might he ask, Why do you practise it?

7. Another consequence is, we have the same kind of evidence, and perhaps more of it, that baptism is to be administered by immersion, or dipping, or putting into water, than we have to support any other gospel precept or practice. The evidence which we have, in either case, is the signification of the words which are used to point out the thing to be believed, or practised.

Were it not for the influence of habit, or custom, you would as readily and naturally conclude, from the very words used, that immersion, or dipping, or washing the body in water, was the meaning of baptism, as that a religious eating of bread, and drinking of wine, in commemoration of our dying Lord, was the way to observe the Lord's supper.

8. We appear to be brought to this dilemma: we must either embrace the tradition of the elders, for the rule of one part of our practise, or we must no more sprinkle, and call it baptism.

9. Another consequence is, those who first introduced sprinkling for baptizing, had no more right so to do, than they had to institute a new rite, or ordinance, and call it Christ's.

What authority have we to follow their erroneous and hurtful practice?

10. We have another consequence worthy of consideration, and it is this: the christian ordinance of baptism is a most solemn and significant ordinance, and of very high importance.

I speak not of the visible, or actual, administration of it, in particular; for I never saw it administered, as Christ hath delivered it to his people. But I refer to the purport, end, and design of it. It is, among many other things, the great dividing line, which Heaven hath appointed to be drawn between the visible kingdom of E-

manuel, and the men of this world. Doubtless there are a large number who belong to Christ's invisible kingdom, who are not, strictly speaking, or regularly, in his kingdom visibly, having not submitted to this ordinance, which is the great and important line of distinction.

11. If appears that we are, truly, in a trying state. We must depart, in one instance, from a long habit, or continue to do as we have done, and ye not be able to vindicate by the scriptures of truth, our own conduct.

Lastly, We come, at length, to the answer of this old and difficult and perplexing question: Were, and when, did the religious sect, called baptists, arise? The answer is, plainly, this. They arose in Judea, at the time when John came, preaching in the wilderness the baptism of repentance. I mention this consequence with considerable assurance, because the New Testament abundantly favours it, and no man is able to contradict me. Should any attempt it, he will fail for want of evidence. I should, not long since, have been gratified, could I have found their origin any where in the dark ages of popery, or at the commencement of the reformation, among the famous enthusiasts of Germany, Holland, Switzerland, or Westphalia. But, after having long pursued the perplexing research, I found their *origin* where I least of all expected it, in Enon and Jordan.

A few questions are now to close the present subject.

1. Is not immersion the scripture baptism?

2. Is sprinkling a mode of baptizing warranted by scripture? If so, where?

3. Are Old Testament rites to explain New Testament ordinances? Is Moses to correct what Christ hath left incomplete? Is it so?

4. Will Christ approve of that practice of men, which so changes his positive institution, as to lose, greatly to lose, the purport, end, and design of it.

5. Was it ever right, and is it now, for men to change what Christ hath commanded to be in perpetual observation? Did not the supposed *extreme cases* justify this change at first, and will trifling inconveniences justify us now?

6. Will it be wise and safe for us continually to forsake the ordinances of Christ for the precepts of men?

7. Do you, my brethren, or can you blame me for wishing you to keep the commandments of Christ as he hath delivered them to the saints?

8. Should I have manifested myself your friend, or Christ's, if, after having found such a precious, new, and old *treasure* in his word, as is the christian ordinance of baptism, I had not ventured my life, or, in other words, my reputation, my ease, my property, and my every worldly consideration, to bring it forth to your view and acceptance, that you might more fully walk in all the statutes and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

One request, my brethren, I pray you to grant me, and it is this: Search the scriptures devoutly, and follow me so far as I follow Jesus Christ, your Lord and mine.

SERMON VI.

MATTHEW xxviii. 19, 20.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. *Amen.*

I HAVE already observed to you, that Christ Jesus, the head of the church, and Lord of all, was now constituting his present and succeeding disciples to be apostles unto all nations. My text is their commission, and general and particular orders. In it they are directed—

I. To go and disciple all nations.

II. To baptize them in the name of the Father, &c.

III. He directs these newly constituted apostles, and all their successors, to teach their baptized disciples to observe all things whatsoever he had given in commandment.

Lastly, For their encouragement and comfort, he adds, and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

What I purposed to say to you, particularly, upon the second proposition, I have said. I now recur to the

I. Which contains Christ's command to *his disciples* to go and *disciple* all nations.

I have already showed you what baptism is, and the design of it. I am now, if the Lord will, to lay open what is commanded to be done, before baptism be administered, also the evidence which the Lord may afford me to prove to you that my instruction is of him.

Your feelings, my brethren and people, have, no doubt, been highly wrought up, whilst I have opened before you one of the laws of Christ's kingdom amongst men. I have still more things to say unto you, respecting the rules and regulations of this kingdom. I pray the Lord that your minds may be so prepared to hear, that you may not forsake me, and flee, as many of Christ's professed friends did, when he preached on a subject which greatly crossed their prejudices and carnal expectations.

Your busy minds, no doubt, will, before you are aware, be enquiring what great and good men, in our days and in the days of our fathers, have said and thought of these things; but we should look farther back than to our forefathers. The man Christ Jesus, and his inspired prophets and apostles, should be the men of our counsel. Should I speak according to these, you may hearken to me with safety; if contrary, convict me by the word and testimony of Jesus Christ; for I appeal to these, for by them ought I to judged.

One request, my hearers, I pray you to grant me, namely: lay prejudice aside, and let scripture, reason, and common sense be heard for a few minutes.

Surely you must consider my case more trying than any of yours. For it is, perhaps, as difficult for me to combat my own prejudices and carnal feelings, as it is for any of you to contend with his: besides this, I have to look your prejudices in the face, while I venture to bring any of your old practices to the scriptures for trial. Yes, more than all this, I have many trials to encounter, which you have not, nor can have.

I should not have made the attempt to bring our former practice to the standard for trial, had not my difficulties been so great, that I durst proceed no farther, without proving my works. One of my practices hath been weighed

in the balance, and is found wanting. I am now, if my heart deceive me not, willing to lead another of my works, or the subjects on which some of my works have been, to the bar for trial. If this shall be found of wood, hay, or stubble, may the fire of truth burn it up, and may the fire of love cause me to rejoice while it shall be consuming.

The proposition which will bring this other of my works to the trial, is —

Christ commands his ministers to go and disciple all nations. I have engaged to be one of these ministers. The command is, therefore, binding upon me. I have gone forth that I might obey. The great thing to be determined is, whether I have understood what it is to disciple, or to make disciples, and have practised accordingly.

The important question to be decided is just this: If I disciple any of you, who are parents, do I, as a necessary consequence, disciple all your children and households?

The only difficulty, in this question, relates to children and households. What it is to disciple the master of a family, is a thing in which christians generally agree.

I ought just to remark to you, that *matheteusate* to teach, is, in its literal and genuine sense, to disciple, or so teach as to make disciples.

To bring the question before you as fully as I can, I wish you, each one of you, to fix his attention upon some one family in this town, in which family not a christian is to be found. If each one have his mind fixed upon such a christless household, I will now put the question:

Suppose I, instrumentally, disciple the father of this family, do I, as a certain consequence, make disciples of the whole family?

Before you determine the question, it may be well to fix in your minds what a disciple is. Let the scriptures speak. The *disciples* were called christians first at Antioch: Acts xi. 26. The commission which Christ gave to the first ministers, and to all succeeding ones, as recorded, Mark xvi. 15, 16, is, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that *believeth*, &c. Here a believer is the same as a *disciple*. Here we see a disciple, in the sense of my text, is a believer, a believer in Christ,

a christian. This is the idea which the New Testament, from beginning to end, gives us of a disciple. There is, however, mention made of disciples, who are so but by profession, or who were visible disciples only; not having the love of God in them.

Now try the question with respect to both sorts of these disciples.

Suppose I, instrumentally, disciple the father of a Christless family, do I, as a necessary consequence, make christians of all his house? You will please to make up your minds on this question, decidedly.

Suppose again, that I, instrumentally, disciple the father of a Christless family, do I, as a necessary consequence, make *visible* disciples of all his family? Let your minds be clearly determined as to the answer.

Once more, suppose I, by delivering the Lord's message, convert or make a disciple of the father of a Christless family, do I, of necessary consequence, make any one of his household besides himself a disciple*?

Let scripture, let reason, let common sense, let any thing, speak, which will speak the truth, and determine these questions. Consider, take advice, and speak your minds.

Can you suppose, or can you not, that to make a father of a family a disciple, his wife, his servants, and his children, are all disciples of course, or of necessary consequence?

Is not this a clear case? and yet the great and momentous subject before us turns, altogether, upon the answer of this question.

If discipling the father of a family renders all his house disciples, they are all subjects of baptism; they have the scripture qualification for it: if it do not, then they have not the qualification which my text requires to be in those who are baptized.

You will judge for yourselves whether households do thus become disciples; as for the rest, the scriptures determine: if they be disciples, they are to be baptized; if not, they are not to be.

* Prejudice may reply, You are to disciple the household by baptizing them. This contradicts my text, that says, disciple them first.

I know what your answer must be, for by incontestible fact, in this town, the discipling of a father of a family does not disciple his household; it does not even make them visible disciples, or give them even the appearance of being so.

The following is for evidence, that persons must be made disciples, before they are baptized.

1. John made his hearers disciples before he baptized them. He required, in order for baptism, that they should bring forth fruits meet for, or as evidence of, repentance: Matt. iii. 8. and Luke iii. 8.

2. Christ's disciples baptized none but such as were made disciples first: John iv. 1, 2.

3 Christ, in my text, gives no liberty to baptize any but such as are first discipled. Yes, he commands his ministers to disciple before they baptize.

The account which Mark gives us of the apostles' commission, and of the baptismal institution, is confirming evidence in this matter: xvi. chap. 15th and 16th verses: "Preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth and is baptized," &c. Here, believing is put before baptism. The way adopted by some to avoid the force of this text is, if they be baptized, say they, no matter when, before or after believing. This way of getting clear of the difficulty appears neither wise nor candid; for it injures the plain meaning of the text, and makes Matthew's and Mark's account of the commission to disagree.

What remains are a number of plain truths, facts, and consequences, which have a more near or remote relation with the subject on hand, and may serve to throw light upon it.

In the first place, we may take notice of two particulars, which, perhaps, have not been sufficiently noticed.

One is, the ceremonial law, and the covenant of circumcision which was annexed to it, appear to be disannulled and past away.

The following may make this matter plain: the disannulling or abolishing of the law, we see Heb. vii. 18: "There is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof." Also Gal. iii. 19: "Wherefore then serveth the law? It

was added because of transgressions, *till* the *seed* should *come* to *whom* the *promise* was made." What seed this is, to whom the promise was made, we are told in the 16th verse of the same chapter: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made: he saith not to seeds, as of many, but as of one, and to thy seed which is Christ." We hence see, that Christ was the seed to whom the promises were made, and that the *law* (the ceremonial law) was added because of transgressions, till the seed, i. e. Christ, should come. It is hence plain that the ceremonial law was to continue no longer than till Christ came.

The covenant of circumcision appears to be annexed to this law. For, says Jesus Christ, John vii. 23. If a man on the sabbath day *receive circumcision*, that the *law* of *Moses* should not be *broken*, are ye angry at me? &c.

That this covenant of circumcision, or the Sinai covenant, which includes it, hath passed away, or is disannulled, see Heb. viii. 13. "In that he saith a new covenant, he hath made the first old: now that which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vanish away."

Besides, circumcision is, evidently, a very important part of that law, which is disannulled; for saith Paul to the Galatians, chap. v. 2, 3. If ye be *circumcised*, Christ shall *profit* you *nothing*. For I testify again, says he, to every man that is *circumcised*, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

It is hence plain, that the ceremonial law is no longer binding, and that the covenant of circumcision, which was incorporated with it, hath vanished away.

The other particular is this: the promises which were made to Abraham and his seed, were not made to him in *circumcision*, but in *uncircumcision*; and the covenant which was confirmed of God, to Abraham, in Christ, was while he was in *uncircumcision*, and about twenty-four years before the *covenant* of *circumcision* was given. Rom. iv. 8, 9, 10. Gal. iii. 16, 17. Gen. xii. 3, 4, 7, and xvii. 10, 17.

Moreover, when Paul speaks of the covenant which was confirmed of God in Christ, he points out the exact year when this was made known, or confirmed with Abraham, as though he had a foresight, as certainly the

Holy Ghost had, of the contention which should be long continued, for want of judiciously understanding what covenant should be disannulled, and what covenant the law could not disannul. He tells us, Gal. iii. 17. That this covenant, which cannot be made void, was four hundred and thirty years before the law: whereas the covenant of circumcision was about four hundred and six years before the law, with which circumcision was united.

Seeing matters are thus, what, I pray you, my hearers, have we to do with the covenant of circumcision? If we keep it, Christ shall profit us nothing: if we observe something which we substitute in its place, Christ may profit us as little in such observance.

I know it will be asked, Is not the church the same now that it was in Abraham's day? I answer, yes, and the same that it was in Noah's, Enoch's and Adam's, and the same that it ever will be. It will be asked again, is not the covenant the same which it was in Abraham's time? Yes, the covenant which was confirmed of God in Christ is unchangeably the same; but the covenant of circumcision, which God made with Abraham, renewed with Isaac and Jacob, and solemnized with Israel in the wilderness, (Deut. xxix. 10, 11, 12, 13,) is far from being the covenant, the *new covenant*, which God makes with the house of Israel in our day. The covenant of circumcision was, more than seventeen hundred years ago, decaying, waxing old, and ready to vanish away. But you will again say, Is not the church composed of parents and children, and of households, now, as it was in Abraham's day? Let Paul answer how it was (as touching the gospel) in Abraham's day and after. Rom. ix. 6, 7, 8. "They are not all Israel which are of Israel, neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but in Isaac shall thy seed be called." That is, they that are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. Just so now. The children of God, the children of the promise, are counted for the seed, and compose the church; and of those who appear thus should the visible church be made up, and of none else. But, if by the question be

meant, Does not church membership descend from parents to children, and from masters to servants, as it appears to have done under the old covenant of circumcision? the *answer* is, The New Testament no where acknowledges, nor does it know any thing about a church thus made up. I would that that all good men would consent to take New Testament directions and examples by which to constitute and guide New Testament churches.

But it will be asked once more, Hath not baptism come into the place of circumcision, and to be applied to similar subjects? *Answer*, Circumcision was a positive institution, and so is baptism. Abraham and the Israelites knew nothing to whom circumcision should be administered, but as they received direction from the Divine Institutor; just so it is with respect to the administration of baptism The christians at Antioch, the elders at Jerusalem, the church of Galatia, and Paul and Barnabas, knew nothing of baptism being substituted for circumcision. Acts xv. 1 to 35; Gal. iii. and v. chapters. We know nothing, and can know nothing, as to whom baptism is to be administered, but what Christ hath told us as to the subjects. Now—

Secondly, I ask what evidence have we from the Bible that infants are to be baptized?

You may reply they are included in the covenant. What covenant? In that of circumcision? Surely not, for that hath vanished away. If you say, in the covenant that was confirmed of God in Christ, I *answer*, it was not this covenant which entitled Abraham's household to circumcision, therefore, though your children be in this covenant, that does not, of itself, entitle them to baptism; whether baptism be in the place of circumcision or not. You will then say, What can entitle our children to baptism? *Answer*, Their being disciples, and so coming within the compass or pale of the baptismal institution.

As we can know nothing of the subjects of baptism, any more than Abraham and Israel could of the subjects of circumcision, but from what we are informed in the institution, and in what is said upon it, we will enquire what the Bible saith of this matter.

If the Lord, in his word, hath not given us sufficient

instruction upon this subject, we must practise in the dark, for we have no where else to go.

We will begin with John. 1. Did he baptize any children? We have no evidence that he did. Besides, he told the multitude, which attended his ministry, not to plead Abraham, or Abraham's covenant, as a title to baptism. Matth. iii. 7, 8, 9, 10.

2. Did Christ's disciples, whilst he was with them, and whilst they *made* and *baptized* more *disciples* than John, baptize infants, or any visible unbelieving children? No evidence that they did.

3. Is there any evidence from my text, which contains the words of the institution, that infants, or unbelieving households, were to be baptized? None: but the contrary.

4. Is there any passage in the New Testament, which commends, or says so much as one word, that infants are to be baptized? Not one.

5. Is there any example, which shows that the apostles baptized any upon the faith of parents, or masters, or upon the faith or promises of any others?

I know, my brethren, there are three instances, which are supposed, by some, to favour the affirmative of the question. I have rather been of the same opinion. If it be so, may facts convince us.

We will look at each of these examples separately.

The first supposed example we find at Philippi. Here was a woman, named Lydia; she appears to have been a woman of business. She belonged to Thyatira, but was now at Philippi, probably selling her merchandize, with several attendants. The history is thus related, Acts xvi. 13th, 14th and 15th verses: "On the sabbath day, we (Paul and other disciples) went out of the city, by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made, and we sat down, and spake unto the women that resorted thither. And a certain woman, named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, who worshipped God, heard us, whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful unto the Lord, come into my house and abide there."

This is all we know of the matter. She belonged to another city. She worshipped God. She was, on the sabbath day, by the side of a river, where prayer was wont to be made The Lord opened her heart to attend to what Paul said. Her servants were with her. She had a house, either of her own, or one taken for the time. She was baptized, and her household. As to her having infants with her, you can tell as well as I. Moreover, whether her servants believed the words of Paul, you can, if you attend to the circumstances, form as correct a judgment, perhaps, as any other can make up for you.

The things to be considered are, 1. Lydia was a godly woman. 2. She attended meeting. Paul found her where prayer was wont to be made, where religious women had been accustomed to meet. 3. She, like other religious people, took her household to meeting with her. 4. It appears that Paul baptized none of her household, but such as were with her at the female praying meeting. 5. The strong probability is, that Lydia, being a pious woman, one who worshipped God, would select, for her attendants, maidens or servants who also were worshippers of God. In verse 40, we are told the apostles entered into the house of Lydia, comforted the brethren, &c. You will weigh these circumstances, and make up for yourselves, so far as you can, a righteous judgment.

The next example is recorded in the same chapter, and appears to be in the same city. This history of the matter is contained in the 25th verse, and to the 34th. The noticeable facts, and on which we must make up our judgments, are: the jailor says, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? Paul and Silas answered, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he was baptized, he and all his, straightway, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

Here are three things to be put together: 1. The word of the Lord Jesus was spoken to them all. 2. They were all baptized. 3. They all believed in God. Whether here be any example of infant baptism, you will judge, each one for himself.

As some have supposed that this passage, and a few others of similar import, afford an argument in favour of sprinkling, it may be well to give it a moment's consideration. Here we are told, that the keeper of the prison brought out Paul and Silas. Where he brought them to seems plainly enough to be gathered from the 32d verse, in which we find them speaking to the jailor the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. In the next verse we are informed that the jailor and all his were baptized. Where they were baptized, we are not told. One thing however is plain, it was not in the house for in verse 34 it is said, When (i. e. after the household were baptized) he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God, with all his house. From these observations, the following things appear:

1. That Paul and Silas were in the jailor's house, when they spoke the word of the Lord to all that were in his house. 2. That when the ordinance of baptism was administered they were not in his house. 3. That the mode of baptizing then in use rendered it inconvenient to be performed in the jailor's house. 4. After the ordinance was administered, they went into the house. How this favours sprinkling I see not.

The other supposed example is in 1 Cor. i 16, where Paul says, I baptized also the household of Stephanas. In the 16th chapter, 15th verse, we have a short history of Stephanas's household: it is thus, "Ye know the household of Stephanas, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that *they* have addressed themselves to the ministry of the saints." Whether there is here found any evidence of infant baptism, you will determine for yourselves.

6. Are the encouragements which are given to parents, in behalf of their children, made to their having them baptized; or are the blessings connected with their dedicating them to the Lord, and with their bringing them up in his *nurture* and *admonition?* With which, your Bibles will inform you.

7. Do we, or do any, pretend, that there is any certain evidence, from either precept or example, for the baptizing of infants? Indeed there is none. Probably not many suppose it.

8. Is there, as some have affirmed, the same evidence for baptizing infants, that there is for observing the Lord's day, for admitting females to communion, and which there is for family prayer?

There is a day called the Lord's day, and religious things were to be observed on it. Are there infants who are called baptized infants, and are they to be attended to as such?

Females and males are declared to be all one in Christ, and so fit subjects for the communion of saints. Are infants unequivocally declared to be fit subjects of baptism?

We have examples of family prayer, and are commanded to pray with all prayer. Are there scripture examples of infant baptism, and are we commanded to baptize all; and so are infants included?

9. Ought I to teach you infant baptism, if our Lord Jesus Christ hath no where directed me to do thus?

10. Hath Jesus Christ spoken one word of baptism as being substituted for circumcision? Hath he any where commanded his ministers to teach this substitution?

Thirdly. Shall we go, and are we under the necessity of going, to the law and covenant of circumcision, to prove infant baptism, when both this law and covenant have long since waxed old, been repealed, and have perished? Heb. vii. 18, 19, and viii. 13.

But you will ask, Are not the blessings of Abraham come on the Gentiles? *Ans.* Yes. You will then say, Are not our children included in the promise? *Ans.* If they be Christ's, then are they Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Gal. iii. 29. Abraham's children, after the flesh, were not included in the promise, as the pædobaptists of our day would have theirs. But you will say again, Are not our children included in the covenant? In what covenant? In that of circumcision? Surely not. For though tha covenant was often renewed, yet it hath long since passed away. Is your question this: Are they not included in that covenant, which was confirmed of God in Christ, twenty-four years previously to the covenant of circumcision? I answer, no man knoweth, nor can know, but as your children give evidence, that they possess the spirit of Christ. But as I have observed

to you before, so I say again, even were your children included in this covenant, and saints: this does not of itself give them any right to baptism, any more than Abraham's being included in the same covenant gave him a right to circumcision. This covenant determines nothing as to the one or the other. The covenant of circumcision determined who were to be circumcised. So the ordinance or institution of baptism determines who are to be baptized. One determines no more who are to be admitted to the other, than does the covenant of an everlasting priesthood (Numb. xxv. 13) determine who shall be ministers in gospel days. In short, there is no arguing from one to the other in this matter. They are both of them positive institutions, and nothing can be known of either, but what is revealed in its particular institution.

While viewing this subject you will enquire, What will become of our children? I answer, God only knoweth, You may rejoin: But what shall we do for them? *Ans.* Dedicate them to God, and, like faithful christians, bring them up for him.

Fourthly. We will now attend to some legitimate consequences which follow, upon supposition that the subjects of baptism are to be determined from the subjects of circumcision.

1. One consequence is, every man who is converted to the christian religion is to be baptized, and all his household, though he may have three hundred and seventeen training soldiers born in his own house. Not only are these soldiers to be baptized, but their wives, children, and all other servants, who belong to this great man's house. A thousand infidels are to be baptized, because one great man, their master, is christianized.

2. These soldiers, with their wives, children, and servants, are all to be considered and treated as church members, or a being in covenant. I confess this does not look to me gospel like.

3. Another consequence is, the adults among these, and among all others, who are baptized, are not only to be admitted to the communion, but required to come. I ask, could such a communion be called the communion

of saints?—one great and good man, with hundreds of unconverted servants.

4. All who have been baptized, and have not, for misdemeanor, been expelled the church, have a right to baptism for their children; and no man may forbid them.

5. Another consequence is, notwithstanding Christ saith, My kingdom is not of this world, yet the regulations were such, especially the mean of admission into it, as strongly, and of infallible consequence, tended to make it of this world, and that abundantly so.

6. Another consequence is, many learned and pious ministers of New-England are inconsistent with themselves, in requiring of persons baptized in infancy a profession of experimental religion, as a term of communion. It was not so done in Israel.

Another consequence is, many of the same pious and learned ministers are very inconsistent with themselves, in refusing baptism to the children of such as are, by their baptism, in regular church membership, or in covenant, as it is termed.

I have taken, as you observe, for granted, what I do not believe to be true, that sprinkling, or a very partial washing, is baptism.

Lastly. Another consequence is, it doth, so far as it hath its *perfect work*, destroy the very idea of the gospel church, contradict the prophets, and make Paul, and others, speak not the truth, and it throws us back to the state of the Jewish church.

Jeremiah, prophesying of the gospel church, saith, chap. xxxi. 31 to 34, Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with your fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord.

If this means any thing, it certainly means that the gospel church shall exceed in purity the Jewish church; that it shall, at least, be composed of professing saints. Isaiah says, chap. liv. 13, All thy children shall be taught of the Lord. The latter of these passages our Lord applies to the gospel day, John vi. 45; the former is applied to the gospel church by Paul, Heb. viii. chap.

Moses says, in Deut. xviii. 15, 19, The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.

This and much more Peter applies to gospel days, and to the gospel church, Acts iii. 22, to the end Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me: him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul that will not hear that prophet, shall be *destroyed from among the people*. Yea, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first, God, having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

Through the New Testament the gospel church is, or appears to be, spoken of as a society, nation, or church of saints; and as being greatly different from the nation of the Jews. But the subjects of baptism being determined by the subjects of circumcision, brings the gospel church, as to its constituent materials, to the same condition with the church under the law of carnal ordinances. Indeed, what is now, generally, called the gospel church, is hardly to be distinguished by its members from the old Jewish church.

Do not these things look as though the twelve hundred and sixty years of antichrist's reign were not wholly past?

Is there not, my brethren, some defiling error at the root of all this? Can such streams as are these consequences flow from a pure fountain? Indeed many good ministers of our land have long since discovered some of these evil consequences, and have laboured hard to testify them. President Edwards, and many others, made a noble stand against this flood of corruption; yet they discovered not the fountain whence these streams flow, and will flow, till it be removed. Putting or mistaking the covenant of circumcision for the covenant which was confirmed of God in Christ to Abraham, twenty-four years before circumcision was known, and substituting baptism for circumcision, and determining the subjects of one by the subjects of the other, without any authority thus to do, have produced all this corruption, deception, and world of evil. Would good ministers be persuaded to lay the axe at the root of the tree, as John did, the evils would be soon rectified.

The subject on which we now are, is of such high concernment to the church of Christ, generally, and your conviction of the truth of it being almost, or quite essential to our future peace and union together, I would willingly omit nothing which might chase away your darkness, and cause the true light to appear. I will, therefore, add here the history of infant baptism. Should we find that infant baptism is of men, as we have already found sprinkling to be, it is hoped that you will either give it up, or practise it as being of man's device, and not, as Mr. Dickinson would have it, as belonging to infants by divine right.

The first information which we have of infant baptism is about the middle of the second century; about which time Irenæus, in one of his epistles, has the following sentence: "The church received a tradition from the apostles to administer baptism to little children or infants*."

The next account we have of this matter, if we except Tertullian, who opposed the practice, is given us by Origen, in about the middle of the third century. His words are, "Little children are baptized for the remission of sins:" for the remission of original sin, or pollution, for

* President Dickinson on Baptism.

of this he is speaking. Again he says, "The church had an *order* from the apostles to give baptism to infants."

Another part of the history of infant baptism we have in a quotation from the decisions of the famous council at Carthage, in the year 253. It is this: "From baptism and the grace of God *none* ought to be *prohibited;* especially infants *need our help* and the divine mercy." We have a farther account from Augustine, who flourished about the middle of the fourth century. His words (writing of infant baptism) are, "Let none, therefore, so much as *whisper* any other doctrine in *your ears;* this the church hath always had, has always held."

The next we hear of infant baptism is, that the practice was confirmed, and so put beyond dispute, by pope Innocent I.

Now fire and sword were the all-conclusive arguments used for the conviction and reformation of all who refused to practice, or dared to call in question, infant baptism. We will pass over the horrid persecutions which now began to be, and have ever since been practised, at intervals, upon those who would not submit to the divine right of infants to baptism, as conferred on them by the ghostly popes of Rome.

Luther, the famous German reformer, says, "That infant baptism was not determined till pope Innocentius;" and Grotius, in his annotations on Matth. xix. says, "It was not enjoined till the council of Carthage*."

We ought, however, to trace the history of infant baptism one step farther, and notice Calvin, and a multitude since, who were unwilling to acknowledge their dependence on the mother of harlots for their authority in this matter; and therefore with great ingenuity have discovered infant baptism, as a gospel ordinance, or the right of infants to it, in the law of Moses. Indeed they have supposed that this doctrine is implied in a number of passages of the New Testament. Yet I believe none who practise it are willing to venture this New Testament ordinance upon New Testament evidence.

Here you see that *tradition* is the foundation of infant baptism; *error*, the belief that *baptism washes* away *ori-*

* Ancient Dialogue revised.

ginal sin, the nurse of its tender age; the church of Rome the confirmer and strong defender of it; and the long since repealed ceremonial law of Moses the evidence for it. You see the introduction of infant baptism was tradition. Upon this foundation hath it manifestly rested ever since. All the ingenious arguments of learned and pious men can, in fact, add no strength to its first foundation. The first we hear of it is, it was placed upon tradition, and there it hath rested, or been standing uneasily, ever since.

Besides, this *tradition*, as well as the practice which followed, is doubtless the offspring of error, and man's invention. At best we have but one witness for it, in the mouth of whom nothing can be established. Origen says, "The church had an *order* from the apostles" Still we had but one witness. Moreover the very expressions of the pædobaptists show that they were from the beginning opposed by the baptists. Irenæus says, "We have a tradition." Origen says, "We have an order." The council of Carthage says, "Infants ought not to be *prohibited* from baptism." Augustine saith, "Let none so much as whisper any other doctrine in your ears." Does not every syllable indicate the dispute which the baptists had with the inventors and supporters of this anti-evangelical principle and practice?

It is worthy of a moment's consideration, that not one of the most ancient fathers make the least pretension that infant baptism was supported by so much as one passage in either the Old Testament or the New; and they mention no authority but *tradition* and an *order* from the apostles, &c. which, at best, are very uncertain things.

Whoever can fix their faith, continue their practice, and venture their responsibility, on such a traditionary foundation, I cannot. Upon this foundation for our practice, have both we and our fathers ventured to oppose the baptists, with greater or less degrees of virulence; whilst, by our tradition, we have greatly injured the ordinance of Christ, if not, in this instance, made void the law of God.

In fine: was not infant baptism first introduced to escape the offence of the cross? Is it not, with many, un-

knowingly continued for the same end? It bringeth the church to its former state as under the law. If I yet preach *circumcision*, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased. Gal. v. 11.

SERMON VII.

MATTHEW xxviii. 19, 20.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. *Amen.*

I HAVE already set before you the principal part of what I intended under the two first propostions in my text. What remains is to bring forward—

III. Christ's command to all his ministering servants to teach all nations, or those who should be discipled among them, to observe all things, whatsoever he had commanded them. And then—

Lastly, His comforting and strengthening promise, which is, And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

To these propositions your serious christian attention is requested. The first is—

III. Christ's command to the ministers of his gospel to teach all nations, or those who should be discipled among them, to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them.

Here you see the extensiveness of my orders received, and which I must carefully observe, would I be obedient unto the Heavenly Teacher, who came from God.

Christ Jesus, when personally on earth, gave a new edition of his own and his Father's mind and will. In this new edition, he abrogated or left out many ceremonies of the old, as being no longer useful. Under the old edition, the church was in its childhood, and therefore under such tutors and governors as were not needed in her riper years.

In this new edition, Christ hath pointed out what is to be preserved in the old. The sum of the moral law, and the prophets, were to continue in force. These are, indeed, in the very nature of things, binding on accountable creatures. But when Christ, the anointed, and expected Messiah, was come, then all those rights, sacrifices, and typical institutions of the ceremonial law, which were together as a schoolmaster to lead the observer to Christ, were disannulled, being no longer of use.

You see what ministers have authority to teach, for both doctrine and practice. It is that Christ hath commanded them, and nothing which is contrary from it.

In time past I have taught you the precepts of Christ, somewhat largely. As I have taught them so you have, as I believed, received them to the saving of your souls. The ordinance of the supper I have taught in its simplicity, and so have you received it. You have also been informed, that Jesus Christ appointed baptism as an ordinance to be observed in his church. But what that ordinance was, and who were the subjects of it, you have not been particularly told, till of late. Nor had I, till a short time since, a clear understanding of either. I, no doubt, ought to have known them before, but till I did, I could not teach them to you. When I came to the knowledge of them, it was no longer in my power to be faithful to Christ, and refuse to teach them. In the simplicity of my heart have I taught you what is baptism, and who are to be baptized.

Whether these things be, or be not, agreeable to my former notions of them, is nothing to the point. One thing I am settled in; I have of late taught them to you as Christ hath commanded me.

Not only was it my duty to teach you these things, but I am commanded to teach you to observe them; for then are you Christ's disciples, when you do all things whatsoever he hath commanded you.

To observe these things, is like obedient children to receive instruction, and then to search the scriptures, that you may know how these things are. It belongs to me to teach you:—

1. To observe these things till you understand them, and then—

2. To observe them in your practice.

1. Would you walk in all the statutes and ordinances of the Lord blameless, you must observe these things till you understand them.

You and I have been unreasonably prejudiced against light and truth in these matters. If I do not misjudge, the Lord hath in answer to prayer afforded me the needed light and knowledge upon the subject. It was not in a day, nor in a month, after my prejudices received a shock, and my mind partial conviction, that I obtained satisfaction. Nor can I expect that you will, all of you, possess such a ready mind, as to give up your long, and almost inveterate, prejudices, and receive the light at once. It is by little and little, that anti-christian errors must be destroyed from the church, and from your hearts, as well as from mine.

You may expect to find me ready, at any time, and at all times, to afford you every instruction, and to answer any objection which may occur to your candid minds. You should have your Bibles always nigh you, and possess continually a prayerful, teachable spirit. Be determined to hearken to none but Christ, and to be obedient to all his commands.

Be careful to avoid all bitterness, and evil speaking. Wisdom will not dwell with strife; nor will the wrath of man work the righteousness of God.

2. It belongs to me to teach you to observe the ordinance of baptism, and the proper subjects in your practice. You must understand these things before you can acceptably practise them. Some of you, no doubt, sufficiently understand them to proceed to practice. But I have not thought it my duty, to hasten your practice, or to lead you by example, lest the minds of others should be injured. It is a time to weaken prejudices, and not to increase them. Wisdom dwells with prudence. Many of your minds, as well as mine, are, with pleasing expectation, looking forward to the time, when we may, with nighly, or quite, all our brethren with us, keep all the ordinances of the gospel, as Christ hath commanded us.

When you shall understand these things, happy will you be if you practise them; for all gospel obedience gives pleasure in the practice.

As Moses had much to do in Egypt, before God said unto him, "Speak unto the people that they go forward," so, my brethren, I may have much to do before things shall be in readiness, and before the Lord shall bid me speak, saying unto you, Go FORWARD. But, if the Lord will, I would live to see that day.

After Israel went forward, and were baptized unto Moses, in the cloud, and in the sea, they had a tedious wilderness to pass; so it may be with us. But should we observe the pillar of cloud and of fire, we shall come to the promised land; and, it may be, with much safety and speed, should we hearken to the good counsel of Joshua.

You know, my brethren, as it is my duty to teach you to observe all things whatsoever Christ hath commanded me, so it is your duty to receive instruction, and be obedient. Your obedience is not to be rendered to me but to Jesus Christ, and to the word of his testimony.

It will doubtless occur to your minds, Whom shall we hear? One minister teaches us one thing, and another teaches us differently. You are to hear no man any farther than he shall teach you as the man Christ Jesus hath commanded him. Ministers have no authority, any farther than they receive it from him. He hath given them no power to teach but what he hath commanded. When they transcribe out of the old into the new edition of God's word and will, and tell us that the rite and covenant of circumcision are to explain to us the observance of a New Testament ordinance, we are not obliged to believe them, unless they point us to the place where Christ hath so commanded. You are to obey them who have the rule over you. But even Paul was not to be followed any farther than he followed Christ. So it ought to be with you, in hearkening to what your teachers say. Ministers are but men, and they have proved themselves to be so, by changing the ordinance of baptism into quite a different thing, and by administering their new rite to subjects to whom Jesus Christ never commanded it. It surely is a surprising thing, and not to be accounted for, but from the relics of

human depravity, that so many good men should, unknowingly, do and teach things which are quite aside from what Christ hath commanded them.

It is too late for you, my hearers, to cloak yourselves under what great and good men have said; for the truth of the Lord hath already been told you. Had I not come and spoken to you this word of Christ, you would not have had sin; but now have you no cloak for disobedience. We now come—

Lastly. To consider Christ's comforting and strengthening promise to his ministering servants; which is, And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

Christ Jesus hath been with his ministers; and he will be,

1. In preparing them for their office. He was personally with his first gospel heralds, for the space of three years, or more; after this he left them for a short space: in this short interval they passed a severe trial. He was with them again at times, for forty days. Soon after this he sent his Spirit upon them, and filled them with it to a remarkable degree. Then they were prepared for their office. They speedily filled it remarkably, and the effect was wonderful. Three thousand were converted in a day.

Christ is as really, though not so apparently, with all his gospel messengers in preparing them to go forth into his harvest. Those who have not Christ with them, to prepare them for their office, are but as wolves in sheeps clothing, when they go forth into the ministry. They preach for filthy lucre, and frequently have their reward. It is too often the case, that those whom Christ hath prepared, are obliged to go into the field, or make tents for their support, whilst such as run, not being sent, swim in luxury.

2. Jesus Christ will be with his ministers in bringing divine things to their remembrance.

It is the Lord's spirit which causeth divine truth to occur to the minds of his servants. Truths, which have been for often for months, and it may be for years, or passages which before were not understood, may be, and not unfrequently are, fresh and plain in the minds of his servants, for their comfort, or for the comfort and instruction of others, or for the comfort and edification of both.

3. Christ will be with his ministers in affording them wisdom, fortitude, and faithfulness.

The entrance of his word giveth light. He maketh light their paths, and ordereth all their steps. He maketh their feet like hind's feet, and causeth them to be swifter than the eagle, stronger than lions, wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. With what wisdom did Stephen speak! With what fortitude did Peter, Paul, and a thousand others, address their auditories! With what wisdom hath he made his servants to speak! With what fortitude to bear, with what faithfulness to endure, for his name's sake! How remarkably hath it been thus in times of persecution! And when will you find a time, when they that are born after the flesh do not persecute those who are born after the Spirit? How often it is the case, when ministers, like Paul, wax bold, and testify that Jesus is the Christ, and what are his word and institutions, that they are persecuted, openly or more secretly.

4. Christ is and will be with his ministering servants, whilst they are reproached and suffering for his name and truth's sake.

He says to them all, If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. When Christ's ministers are reviled and suffer for his sake, his truth and Spirit bears their spirits up. He gives them to believe and know, that though they weep now, they shall soon rejoice; that their light afflictions, which are but for a moment, are preparing them for, and working out for them, a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory.

5. Christ Jesus will be with his faithful ministers in giving them to see their desires upon his enemies.

This appears to be particularly implied in my text. They are commanded to go and disciple all nations. Their desire is to see disciples multiplied. They go forth: Christ goes forth with them. Many of Christ's enemies submit to his yoke, which is easy, and to his burden, which is light. In this are they gratified, and their desire on them is accomplished.

6. Christ is with his ministers in explaining and defending his truth.

How did Peter, Paul, and others, in the first ages of christianity, explain and vindicate the truth, to the confounding of both Jews and Gentiles! Whenever, in ages since, he hath spoken the word, great hath been the company, or force, of those who have published, explained, and defended it. Martin Luther, John Calvin, and a number more in the reformation, were like flames of fire: nothing could stop them from publishing, explaining, and defending the truths of the Saviour, for he was with them.

You will ask, How is it that Christ is with his ministers when they contradict one the other, and themselves too? *Answer*, It is not said, that Christ is with his ministers in explaining and defending error. Error is human; truth is divine. When ministers undertake to support error, they go without Christ's blessing and presence in this their labour. Hence it is that they are so contradictory and inconsistent, and are obliged to wrest the scriptures from their plain and easy sense, to support a beloved prejudice. But when they take up for truth, plain scriptures support them, and they have plain and pleasant work, and their subjects supported with ease, as you have seen whilst attending to the several truths in my text.

Besides, it may be the case, that some very good men may mix truth and error, the commands of God and their own traditions, together; and, whilst practising accordingly, they may enjoy a comfortable frame of mind, and hence conclude that their beloved compound is all from heaven. This may be illustrated by the following example. Mr. S. finds it to be a truth, that his infant offspring, as well as every thing else, should be devoutly given to God. He hath received and holds a tradition from the fathers, that his infants should be baptized. He publicly gives them to the Lord, and solemnly promises to instruct them in the way of truth and duty. He, at the same time, hath the ordinance of baptism administered to them, or administers it himself. During the whole transaction he possesses much comfort in his mind. His consequence is, the whole matter is according to truth, just as God would have it. Is not this going a little too much by sense, and not quite enough by scripture? Does it not contain a

spice of enthusiasm? Would not the good man have had the same mental satisfaction, had he possessed the same spirituality, and yet had omitted that part which is enjoined by tradition only?

Lastly. The Great Captain of salvation is with his ministers, to teach, lead, and comfort them, in all their trials, in all their straits. Whosoever will leave them, he will not. Though he, the Great High Priest of our profession, when suffering for his people's sins, was left alone; all forsook him: yet, whenever his friends are afflicted, he kindly calls, saying, Lo, I am with you. This hath been the stay of good men in all ages, in all circumstances. Those who have wandered about in sheep skins and goat skins, who have been afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy, have found their refuge here. There is nothing like this to support the feeble, distressed soul. When godly ministers have been obliged to leave their people, wives, and their families, and sometimes their native country, for the truth's sake, this hath sustained them—Christ was with them. President Edwards, for a noble attempt at partial reformation, was constrained to flee his beloved charge: but Christ was, no doubt, with him. Should I, for laying the axe at the root of the tree, be obliged to leave you, though, for the present, I see no particular reason to apprehend such an event, yet I trust this will be my hiding place—Jesus, who will be with me.

APPLICATION.

From what hath been said in the preceding discourses, it appears—

1. That the two sides of the controversy between the baptists and the pædobaptists stand thus.

Before I state the two sides of the controversy, it is but reasonable that I define those whom it respects. By the baptists, on one side, I mean the regular calvinistic baptists. By the pædobaptists, on the other, I now intend the calvinistic congregationalists among them. I give this definition, that I may be clearly understood.

You see both sides are calvinists, that is, they are agreed in what are styled the doctrines of grace. They are both of the congregational order, as it respects the government of the churches.

Now for the controversy, and it is this. The baptists hold immersion only to be baptism. The pædobaptists hold that sprinkling may be substituted for immersion, and may answer just as well.

The baptists hold that the scriptures know nothing of a christian ordinance of baptism for unbelievers and infidels. The pædobaptists hold that, if a great man, who hath a thousand slaves, should become a disciple, then all his household are to be counted disciples, and are to be baptized.

The baptists hold that the church of the New Testament is composed of visible or professed saints. The consistent pædobaptists hold, that this great man, his thousand slaves, together with his wife and children, all belong to the gospel church, though he only be a believer in Christ.

The baptists hold that none have a right to partake of the Lord's supper, but those who are his friends. The consistent pædobaptists hold, that all the adults in this great man's household, if they be not guilty of gross immorality, have a right to come.

The baptists plead New Testament authority for the defence of their principles and practice, where they differ from their brethren of the pædobaptists. The pædobaptists, in support of their sentiments, plead convenience, and the covenant and rite of circumcision, which were decaying, waxing old, and ready to vanish away, more than seventeen hundred years ago.

The baptists bring nighly three score texts of scripture, which are plainly and fully to their point, in favour of immersion. The pædobaptits mention three or four texts, which, at most, are but very doubtfully in their favour; and, when rightly understood, appear fully against them.

What advantage, my brethren, have the pædobaptists over the baptists? and with what crime, or error, in this matter, do they stand convicted?

2. It appears that gospel ministers have no authority to

teach christians that their children and servants should be baptized, because Abraham's were circumcised.

Christ hath no where commanded them to teach thus. Christ hath no where commanded them to teach infant baptism at all, or baptism upon the faith of another; much less that they are to be baptized because Abraham's were circumcised.

3. It appears that many of the pious and learned clergy of New-England, have made some noble and promising advances towards truth in this matter; yet in this they are inconsistent with themselves.

They will receive none to the communion but such as profess faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, as well as repentance for sin; and they will administer baptism to the children of no other. Here, in two instances, they refuse to follow the law of circumcision. One, in refusing to admit to the supper, impenitent, though civil, baptized persons: the other, in not admitting to baptism the children of all those who have been baptized. This is consistent with truth so far as it goes; but inconsistent with the notion that the subjects of baptism are to be determined from the subjects of circumcision.

These good men, so long as they possess their present light, must come over to the true baptist ground, or submit to the imputation of inconsistency. I wish them to come over. For myself, I expect to, though my carnal nature hates the name of a baptist as much as theirs does. But my better judgment tells me, that the baptists are on the gospel ground.

4. It is a matter of lamentation, that pious and learned ministers have not a little more self-denial: then they might be consistent with themselves and with truth too. Could I be with them, and ask them this plain question, Do you not find a little backwardness from searching critically into the primitive meaning and practice of baptism? I fear they would answer with some reluctance.

To me, I confess, it appears a hard case, that the baptists should suffer so much reproach, merely on account of their sentiments, when many of our best old divines have given them the ground, and confessed, that their sentiments, as to the mode, are from heaven, and ours

from convenience. Our opposition to them, on account of the subjects, appears but little better, being but poorly supported by scripture: they having the plain word and full current of all the prophets from Moses to Malachi, so far as they have spoken of the gospel church, together with the New Testament, in their favour; whilst for us, in this particular, nothing better can be alledged, than the antiquated rite of circumcision. If the baptists be right, why not join them, and suffer small inconveniences? If wrong, why not prove them so? It is pitiful that great and good men should be dallying with inconclusive arguments, when the time is long since come, that the *high-way* of holiness should be so plain, that wayfaring men, though fools, should not err therein.

5. We see why good men have been so divided among themselves, as to infant baptism.

The reason is, they go without Christ, in this matter, He is not divided.

Some baptize all. Others will baptize only the children in the households of communicants. Some baptize upon the half way covenant. Some will baptize all who are under age. Again, others will baptize all under seven. Others still will baptize upon the good promises of godfathers and godmothers. You will observe I use the word baptize in a sense which I believe to be improper, but I would not offend you with a word, when my meaning may be understood. But what propriety is there in all this inconsistency about the subjects of baptism? Does not the matter look as though there were no rule to go by, or as though none understood what it was?

6. We see why good men, when writing or speaking of baptism, are left to speak untruths.

It is doubtless because they will follow their own prejudices, and not the truth. Error hath divided them, and Christ is not with them in what they say. Some good men, not many, dare assert, in opposition to the baptists, that there is not a word about immersion for baptism in all the Bible. For *laymen* to say thus is *presumption*, and for men of *learning* to make the assertion, is *almost unpardonable*. For they know, or ought to know, that the word to baptize is not once mentioned in all the Bible,

but immersion is mentioned, unless they mean to play upon the word; and then it is a truth when *baptizo* is mentioned, immersion is, if they will give it its plain literal English.

If the baptists have the plain, literal, and unequivocal sense of the scripture in their favour, is it not enough that they are despised and persecuted, by the wicked of every class, and not helped by any; but must we add to to their affliction, by falshood, or equivocation! O prejudice, what wilt thou not do, even in a saint!

Besides, our good brethren, who are so warm against the baptists, and will not allow them a word for their mode, do not agree together to inform us what the mode should be. One tells us, it is sprinkling; another says, pouring is the mode; a third contends for washing the face; a fourth is for putting water on the back of the neck, as the Swiss are said to do; whilst others affirm that all these are right. Now, suppose the baptists are wrong, who shall we say are in the right, or is there no right in this business? Does not all this look just as it would were there an error at the bottom? Hath the Great Teacher, who came from God, left matters thus, at loose ends? Does the Bible thus differ, whilst pointing out the mode? No; its language is pure and determinate.

7. It appears that, in infant sprinkling for baptism, the intent of the institution is lost, and becomes no christian ordinance at all.

Both the thing itself and the subjects of it are changed. It is quite a different thing from what the institutor hath appointed. Neither this mode, nor these subjects, are known in the institution, nor in any passage of the Bible, where baptism is mentioned. This mode is of man's device, and the subjects of it have, at best, but a traditional right. For good men to do thus, whilst they think it consistent with truth, appears to be a sin of ignorance; but if any do thus, while they know what the scriptures enjoin, their practice deserves a harder name.

8 It appears that dipping, immersion, or burying in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is baptism.

No man of real piety, and solid learning, ever doubted

it; whereas, sprinkling hath been doubted by many, denied continually, by a large class of christians, and been proved by none to have been ever appointed as the christian ordinance of baptism.

9. We see, that every plea which hath been made, for a general or partial neglect of the scripture mode of baptism, is an indirect, though unintentional, charge of negligence, or want of benevolence, or of foresight, in the divine institutor. Let every man of candour and common sense examine this matter. Did not the Lord, who made our northern climes, know how cold they are?—Did he know them to be too cold for his disciples who might live in them, to be separated from the world by being visibly buried and raised again to join his kingdom? Why then did he not mention an exception in our favour, and not leave us to suffer this inconvenience, or be in perpetual uncertainty, and continual dispute, to defend our, at best, but doubtful practice? Did he not perfectly know all the compelling necessities, which Cyprian and others would, in their erring judgments, find to break over the bounds of the baptismal institution? Why then did he make no provision for these extreme cases? By doing thus, he would have saved the pædobaptists a world of anxiety, contention, and censure. The fact appears to be, that our Lord intended, that the way of admission into his kingdom should be uniform, and that those, who would not submit to it, should suffer the inconvenience of darkness, error, and strife.

10. From what hath been said in the preceding discourses, is not the following a fair and undeniable conclusion? That I and other pædobaptist ministers, so far as we have spoken a word against the baptists, and especially that those, who have publicly warned their people to avoid the baptists and flee from them, as from a dividing and dangerous heresy, have in this matter acted the part of the old Scribes, Pharisees, and hypocrites who would not go into the kingdom of themselves, and those who were entering they hindered.

I by no means suppose that all who have done thus are indeed hypocrites, save in this particular. No reasonable doubt can be entertained, but many of them are learned,

pious, and very useful men; men, whom the Lord hath greatly honoured as labourers, in gathering in the harvest of souls. Many of these have been, in a measure, bold, zealous, and faithful, like Peter; yet when they dissemble, or teach and practise contrary from the truth, they are to be blamed, yes, they are, in this instance, worthy to be rebuked.

It would, indeed, be very injudicious in me to contend that all which the baptists have said and done is justifiable. It would be equally injudicious to justify myself or my brethren, where we have both said and done things contrary from the church and name of Jesus of Nazareth. It is time for both ministers and people to look to this matter, lest the Lord send leanness into our souls.

11. From a review of the whole subject, the following inference appears natural, and at the same time worthy of much consideration. The divinely constituted method, by which any of the fallen race are to enter the kingdom of heaven below, remarkably sets to our view the way by which we are to commence perfect members of the kingdom of heaven above. Our obedience to the former is a practical declaration of our faith in the latter.

In joining Christ's kingdom on earth, we professedly die unto sin, go down to the grave, are buried, and rise, as from the dead. To join the kingdom of glory, we must actually experience what is but shadowed forth in baptism. We must die, be buried, or return to the dust, and rise from the dead.

How exactly doth our entrance into the church militant shadow forth our hoped for entrance into the church triumphant! It also appears that Christ hath directed, that the subjects of the one should be professedly, what the subjects of the other shall be actually, all saints.

How beautiful doth the church appear, so far as she observes the commands of her Lord, as to the members which she admits, and the manner of receiving them! She thus resembles Jerusalem, which is above, which is the mother of us all, if we be christians. May the Lord direct our hearts into the love of the truth.

In the conclusion of the whole, it becomes us to add, to the truths delivered, what Christ Jesus added to my text: AMEN.

A MINIATURE HISTORY

OF THE

Baptists.

IT may be pleasing to some of my readers to be presented with a brief account of the baptists. I shall extract this account from the writings of those who were not of the baptists' denomination, but rather prejudiced against them.

Here it may be observed, that the religious sect called baptists, have caused the learned world more perplexity and research to decypher their origin, than any other sect of christians, or, perhaps, than all others. Yes, this research hath baffled all their erudition in ancient story.

It is not difficult to fix the period when one sect of this denomination was first called Petrobrussians, when another was known by the name of Waterlandians, when a third was denominated Mennonites, &c. But the difficult is this, to ascertain the time, place, and medium, by which Christ's disciples were led to adopt the peculiar sentiment, which is now held by those called baptists, and which distinguishes them from all other denominations.

It may be farther observed, that if no one, however learned and wise, be able to trace this sect to any beginning short of the days of the apostles, or of Christ, it is possible that it then arose. Besides, if all other religous denominations, or the pœdobaptists, who include all which are not baptists, can be traced to any probable origin short

of the apostles, and the baptists cannot be, it affords still more probability, that they might have arisen then.

I wish my readers to indulge me in one question, and to give me an explicit answer. Are you willing to have the origin of the baptists explored, and to open your eyes to the light, should light be afforded?

You cannot, my christian readers, unless your minds be unduly swayed by prejudice, do otherwise than say Yes. For, though you be not very friendly to the baptists, you will not deny them what you grant to your worst enemy, liberty to speak the truth, and that truth its weight, at least in measure.

It ought to be particularly noted, that my object is not to give a history of a name, but of a principle. I shall not contend who were first called baptists, anabaptists, Mennonites, or the like; but who have held the peculiar sentiment which is adopted by those who are called baptists. Wherever we find this principle, there we find the men, the christians, who, had they lived to our day, would be styled baptists. Nor is the present controversy this, whence came that *mode* of baptism, which is practised by all, who are known by the name of baptists. For this mode is granted, generally, if not universally, by all learned and honest men, to be as ancient as John the baptist and the apostles. This mode is, indeed, not peculiar to the baptists, for the pædobaptists, for many centuries, practised this mode; and many of them do, to this day, practise immersion.

The peculiar characteristic of the baptists is this: they hold, that the ordinance of baptism is to be administered to adults, or to visible believers only.

One natural consequence of this principle is, when any one who was baptized, or sprinkled, in his infancy, comes over to the baptists' sentiment, they require him to be baptized. Hence they are called anabaptists. Another very natural consequence is, this sentiment constrains the baptists to oppose the baptism of infants. Hence they are distinguished by the name of antipædobaptists.

I shall add one observation more, and then proceed to give you a succinct history of the baptists. The obser-

vation is this: Whenever and wherever I find persons, who hold the peculiar characteristic sentiment of the baptists, I shall call them by that name. Their history now follows.

I. The origin of the baptists can be found no where, unless it be conceded, that it was at Jordan, or Enon.

Dr. Mosheim, in his history of the baptists, says, "The *true origin* of that sect, which acquired the denomination of the anabaptists, by their administering anew the right of baptism to those who come over to their communion, and derived that of Mennonites from the famous man to whom they owe the greatest part of their present felicity, is *hid* in the *remote depths* of *antiquity*, and is of consequence extremely difficult to be ascertained."

Here, Dr. Mosheim, as learned an historian, though not so candid a one, as the science of letters can boast, bears positive testimony that the origin of the baptists is hidden in the *remote depths* of *antiquity*. Nothing is more evident than this; the doctor either knew not their origin, or was not candid enough to confess it. At least, we have this conclusion, that he could find their origin no where short of the apostles.

II. A large number of the baptists were scattered, oppressed, and persecuted, through many, if not through all, the nations of Europe, before the dawn of the reformation under Luther and Calvin. When Luther, seconded by several princes of the petty states of Germany, arose in opposition to the over-grown usurpations of the church of Rome, the baptists also arose from their hiding places. They hoped that what they had been long expecting and praying for was now at the door; the time in which the sufferings of God's people should be greatly terminated: but God had not raised Luther's views of reformation so high the height the baptists were expecting. Their detestation of the Mother of Harlots, owing to their bitter experience of her cruelties, and the clear gospel light, with which they had been favoured above Luther, and their ardent desire to be utterly delivered from her cruel oppressions, made them wish to carry the reformation

farther than God had appointed Luther to accomplish They were soon disappointed in Luther, and probably did not duly appreciate the reformation which he was instrumentally effecting. It was as might have been expected; the Lutherans and the baptists fell out by the way; and Calvin, if not Luther, warmly opposed them *See Mosheim, Cent.* XVI. *Chap.* iii. *Sect.* 3. *Part.* 2.

Mosheim vol. IV. page 427, speaking of the baptists says, "This sect started up all of a sudden, in several countries, at the same point of time, and at the very period when the first contest of the reformers with the Roman pontiffs drew the attention of the world." From this we have one plain and fair deduction; that the baptists were before the reformation under Luther and Calvin and therefore did not take their rise from the enthusiasts under Munzer and Storck, or at that time; or at Munster.

III. The Hussites, in the fifteenth century, the Wickliffites, in the fourteenth, and the Petrobrussians, in the twelfth, and the Waldenses, were all baptists. To this fact Dr. Mosheim bears the following testimony*. "It may be observed that the Mennonites (i. e. the baptists of East and West Friesland, Holland, Gelderland, Brabant, Westphalia, and other places in the north of Europe) are *not entirely mistaken*, when they boast their descent from the Waldenses, Petrobrussians, and other *ancient* sects, who are usually considered as *witnesses* of the *truth* in times of universal darkness and superstition Before the rise of Luther and Calvin, there lay *concealed* in *almost all* the countries of Europe, particularly in Bohemia, Moravia, Switzerland, and Germany, many persons, who adhered tenaciously to the following doctrines which the Waldenses, Wickliffites and Hussites had maintained; some in a more disguised, and others in a more open and public manner, viz. *That the kingdom of Christ or the visible church he had established upon earth, was a assembly of true and real saints, and ought therefore to be inaccessible to the wicked and unrighteous, and also exempt from all those institutions which human prudence suggested to oppose the progress of iniquity, or to correct and reform*

* Vol. 4, pages 428, 429.

transgressors. This maxim is the true source of all the peculiarities that are to be found in the religious doctrine and discipline of the Mennonites (or baptists in the north of Europe), and it is most certain that the *greatest part* of these *peculiarities* were approved of by many of those who before the dawn of the reformation, entertained the notion already mentioned relating to the visible church of Christ."

From this testimony of Dr. Mosheim we may remark—

1. That the Mennonites were baptists, or anabaptists, for these different names he uses to express one and the same thing.

2. That the Petrobrussians were baptists; for the baptists assert, and Mosheim allows it, that they were their progenitors in principle and practice. Besides, in his history of the twelfth century, part II. chap v. sect. 7. he expressly tells us, that one of their tents was, *that no persons whatsoever were to be baptized before they were come to the full use of their reason.*

3. That the Waldenses, Wickliffites, and Hussites were baptists; for, as Mosheim says, they all held to the great and leading maxims which is the true source of all the peculiarities that are to be found in the religious doctrine and discipline of the Mennonites. These several denominations of christians were not known by the ancient, modern, and appropriate name, baptists. But their doctrine and discipline were the same with our baptists, and were they now living, they would be thus called. In other words; just so far as they were consistent with the great and leading *maxim*, and just so far as the modern baptists are consistent with *their* great and leading maxim, just so far these ancient and modern baptists are alike one to the other.

4. That in the sixteenth century the Waldenses, Petrobrussians, and other ancient sects (i. e. of the baptists) were usually considered as having been witnesses of the truth, in the times of darkness and universal superstition. How differently from this would and do many consider them in our day!

5. That before the rise of Luther and Calvin, there lay

concealed in almost all the countries of Europe, particularly in Bohemia, Moravia, Switzerland, and Germany, many persons who held the same doctrine and discipline with the baptists in our day, and were of necessary and fair consequence, of the same denomination.

IV. We have already traced the baptists down to the 12th century. We have also found that they were scattered over almost all the countries of Europe, and were, in the dark ages of popery, the witnesses of the truth; or have been usually thus considered. Besides, we have found that the Waldenses were, in principle and practice, baptists; or in other words, we have found that the Waldenses were baptists. We will now see to what origin we can trace the Waldenses.

Dr. Maclaine, who translated Mosheim's Church History from the original Latin, gives us, vol. III. pages 118, 119, under note G. the following history of the Waldenses. His words are: "We may venture to affirm the contrary (i. e. from what Mosheim had just said of the Waldenses taking their name from Peter Waldus) with Beza and other writers of note; for it seems evident, from the best records, that Valdus derived his name from the true Valdenses of Piedmont, whose doctrine he adopted, and who were known by the names of Vaudois and Valdenses, before he, or his immediate followers, existed. If the Valdenses or Waldenses had derived their name from any eminent teacher, it would probably have been from Valdo, who was remarkable for the purity of his doctrine, in the ninth century, and was the cotemporary and chief counsellor of Berengarius. But the truth is, that they derive their name from their valies in Piedmont, which in their language are called Vaux. Hence Vaudois, their true name; hence Peter (or, as others call him, John) of Lyons, was called in Latin Valdus, because he had adopted their doctrine; and hence the term Valdenses and Waldenses, used by those who write in English, or Latin, in the place of Vaudois. The bloody inquisitor Reinerus Sacco, who exerted such a furious zeal for the destruction of the Waldenses, lived but about eighty years after Valdus of

Lyons, and must therefore be supposed to know whether or not he was the real founder of the Valdenses, or Leonists; and yet it is remarkable, that he speaks of the Leonists as a sect that had flourished about five hundred years; nay, mentions authors of note, who make their antiquity remount to the apostolic age. *See the account given of Saccois book of the Jesuit Grester in the* Bibliotheca Patrum: I know not upon what principle Dr. Mosheim maintains that the inhabitants of the vallies of Piedmont are to be carefully distinguished from the Waldenses, and I am persuaded that whoever will be at the pains to read attentively the 2d, 25th, 26th and 27th chapters of the first book of Leger's Histoire des Eglises Vaudoises, will find this distinction entirely groundless. When the papists ask us *where our religion was before Luther*, we generally answer, *in the Bible*, and we answer well. But to gratify their taste for tradition and human authority, we may add to this answer—*and in the vallies of Piedmont.*"

To the above we may add, one of the popish writers, speaking of the Waldenses, says, "*The heresy of the Waldenses is the oldest heresy in the world**."

It is here worthy to be particularly noticed,

1. That Reinerus Sacco speaks of the Waldenses, or baptists, of his day, as a sect that had, at that time, flourished for about five hundred years; which brings the history of the baptists, as a religious sect, down to the fifth century.

2. That the same Reinerus Sacco mentions authors of note, who make the antiquity of the Waldensean baptists to remount to the apostolic age.

3. That the baptists are the most ancient of all the religious sects, who have set themselves to oppose the ghostly powers of Romanists.

4. That there be any body of christians, who have existed during the reign of antichrist, or of the man of sin, the baptists have been this living church of Jesus Christ.

* President Edwards' History of Redemption, p. 247.

5. The consequence of the whole is this: The baptists have no origin short of the apostles. They arose in the days of John the baptist, and increased largely in the days of our blessed Saviour, when he shewed himself unto Israel, and the days of his apostles, and have existed, under the severest oppressions, with intervals of prosperity, ever since.

But as to the pædobaptists, their origin is at once traced to about the middle of the second century; when the mystery of iniquity not only began to work, but, by its fermentation, had produced this error of fruitful evils, namely, that baptism was essential to salvation; yes, that it was regeneration. Hence arose the necessity of baptizing children. Now comes forward Iræneus, and informs that the church had a *tradition* from the apostles to give baptism to infants. We are told in the Appendix to Mosheim's Church History, that one of the remarkable things which took place in the second century, was the baptizing of infants, it being never known before as a christian ordinance for them.

What a pity it is, that good men, who have renounced the error, which was, as church history informs us, the progenitor of infant baptism, should still retain its practical and erroneous offspring, to the prejudice and marring of the church of God! Not a single sect of the pædobaptists can find its origin nearer to the apostles than the second century. We hence conclude, that their origin was there, and that they then and there arose in the mystery which was then working. May the Father of lights open the eyes of my brethren, that they may come out of this, perhaps, the last thicket of gross error and darkness.

I will now add—

V. The testimony which President Edwards bears in favour of the Waldenses and other faithful ones, who were scattered through all parts of Europe in the dark ages of popery. It is the following.

"In every age of this dark time, there appeared particular persons in all parts of Christendom, who bore a testimony against the corruptions and tyranny of the

church of Rome. There is no one age of antichrist, even in the darkest time of all, but ecclesiastical historians mention a great many by name, who manifested an abhorrence of the pope and his idolatrous worship, and pleaded for the ancient purity of doctrine and worship. God was pleased to maintain an uninterrupted succession of witnesses, through the whole time, in Germany, France, Britain, and other countries, as historians demonstrate, and mention them by name, and give an account of the testimony which they held. Many of them were private persons, and many of them ministers, and some magistrates and persons of great distinction. And there were numbers in every age, who were persecuted and put to death for this testimony.

"Besides these particular persons, dispersed here and there, there was a certain people, called the Waldenses, who lived separate from all the rest of the world, who kept themselves pure, and constantly bore a testimony against the church of Rome, through all this dark time. The place where they dwelt was the Vaudois, or the five vallies of Piedmont, a very mountainous country, between Italy and France. The place where they lived was compassed with those exceeding high mountains, called the Alps, which were almost impassable. The passage over these mountainous desart countries, was so difficult, that the vallies where this people dwelt were almost inaccessible. There this people lived for many ages, as it were alone, where, in a state of separation from all the world, having very little to do with any other people, they served God in the ancient purity of his worship, and never submitted to the church of Rome. This place, in this desart, mountainous country, probably was the place, especially meant in the xii. chapter of Revelations, 6 verse, as the place prepared of God for the woman, that they should feed her there during the reign of antichrist.

"Some of the popish writers themselves own that that people never submitted to the church of Rome. One of the popish writers, speaking of the Waldenses, says, the heresy of the Waldenses is the oldest heresy

in the world. It is supposed that this people first betook themselves to this desart, secret place among the mountains, to hide themselves from the severity of the heathen persecutions, which were before Constantine the Great, and thus the woman fled into the wilderness from the face of the serpent, Rev. xii. 6; and so verse 14, And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time from the face of the serpent. And the people being settled there, their posterity continued there from age to age afterwards, and being as it were by natural walls, as well as by God's grace, separated from the rest of the world, never partook of the overflowing corruption."

It is hoped that the reader will very carefully and candidly compare what is testified to us by three very learned men, Dr. Mosheim, Dr. Maclaine, and President Edwards. The testimony of the first is, that the Waldenses, and many others who are *usually considered as witnesses of the truth* in the times of *universal darkness and superstition*, were essentially agreed with the baptists of modern date, as to *principle and practice*, or as to the great maxim whence flow all the peculiarities of that denomination. His testimony, in short, is this: The Hussites, the Wickliffites, the Petrobrussians, and the Waldenses, with other witnesses of the truth, scattered over Europe, in the dark ages of popery, were essentially the same with the baptists of later times: or that they all were what we call baptists.

Dr. Maclaine testifies that the Waldenses flourished as early as the fifth century: yes, he informs us that some authors of note carry their antiquity up to the apostolic age.

President Edwards informs us that these Waldenses were the main body of the church, in the dark ages, and have been, together with their scattered brethren, the pure church of Jesus Christ, during the reign of antichrist, and of certain consequence were succes-

EXTRACT

From the Baptist Missionary Magazine, No. IV.

ACCOUNT

OF THE

Baptist Church,

LATELY CONSTITUTED AT SEDGWICK,
DISTRICT OF MAINE.

THE Reverend Daniel Merrill, graduated at rtmouth College, 1789, was ordained over the Congregationalist church in Sedgwick, in September, 1793. His labours have been very much blessed among his people, who have experienced several precious seasons of revival under his ministry, particularly in the years 1798 and 1801.

Several circumstances occurred to lead Mr. Merrill, in the course of the last year, to review, with more critical attention, the grounds on which he had practised *infant baptism*. The result of his inquiries may be learned from the preceding sermons on baptism, and from the following account of his baptism, &c.

At a meeting of the church, (or covenanted brethren) February 28. 1805, they voted unanimously to send for a council of baptist ministers to come and assist them in the following particulars, viz. 1st. To administer christian baptism to them; 2d. To constitute them into a

church, upon the primitive baptist platform; 3d. T
over them in the Lord, the Reverend Daniel Merr
be their minister.

Agreeably to their request, Messrs. Pitman of P
dence, Baldwin of Boston, and Williams of Be
accompanied by a number of brethren, took passa
Salem, eight o'clock on Thursday evening the 9t
of May, inst. and arrived at Sedgwick the Saturda
lowing, at 1, P. M. Lord's-day, half past ten o'c
Mr. Pitman preached from Acts v. 20. After an
mission of half an hour, Mr. Baldwin preached
1 Cor. iii. 9. After another intermission of a fe
nutes, Mr. Williams addressed the people from
xxv. 25. At six, Mr. Baldwin preached again,
Sol. Song, i. 8.

Monday, May 12, at 2, P. M. the council fo
and adjourned until the next day. At 3, assemb
the meeting-house, and Mr. Williams preached
John xiv. 21. After which proceeded to an exami
of the candidates for baptism, until the day was spe

Tuesday, 13th, examined a number more candi
At half past 10, Mr. Williams preached particular
the institution, from Acts ii. 41. Immediately af
repaired to the water's side. The place fixed upo
the administration of this solemn ordinance, was
tide waters of Benjamin's river, about one mile fro
sea. A more beautiful or convenient place is scarc
be imagined.

The land adjoining was sufficiently elevated to a
modate spectators with the best possible prospect
yet sloping so gently to the margin of the river, that
at the farthest distance might see as plainly as thos
stood nighest.

As soon as the people were assembled at the w
side, solemn prayer was offered up to that God
ordinance we were going to attend. A profound
reigned through the assembly, when Mr. Baldwi
Mr. Merrill by the hand, and walking slowly in
water, repeated these words, *And they went dow
into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and h*

im. When they had gotten to a suitable depth, dinance was performed. Mr. Merrill, rising from atery grave, with a very pleasant, smiling counte- could not refrain expressing the heart-felt fatis- he enjoyed in this act of obedience. As they led out of the water, Mr. Williams went down with Merrill, repeating these words, *And they were both ous before God, walking in all the commandments and nces of the Lord blameless.* In this way the bap- was conducted, until all the candidates present aptized. Here, we beheld sixty-six persons buried tism by these two administrators, in forty-two mi-

The candidates, both females as well as males, ded into the water with the greatest calmness ima- ; and in general they came out of it rejoicing in a manner as we have seldom seen. Numbers of could not refrain giving glory to God our Saviour, y his own example marked out this humble, bles- y. The spectators behaved with the utmost pro-

They were not only solemn, but many of them n tears. A heart must be adamant not to have d at such a moving scene. The service was con- by prayer and singing.

ive o'clock the people assembled again at the meet- use, and Mr. Pitman preached to them from John .

dnesday morning the council met, and arranged siness of the afternoon. Then examined and bap- nineteen candidates more, in the same place and r as described above. At one o'clock assembled n the meeting-house; when the baptized members, , as we hope, first given themselves to the Lord, ave themselves to one another by the will of God. thus covenanting with each other, the Reverend ase, by the appointment of the council, addressed n a few words, and gave the right hand to them, ken of our fellowship with them as a sister church ist: and by solemn prayer *commended them to d the word of his grace, which is able to build them*

up, and give them an inheritance among all them that are sanctified.

The council immediately proceeded to ordain Mr. Merrill. Mr. Baldwin introduced the solemnity by prayer, and then addressed the people in a well adapted and very impressive discourse, founded on part of the third verse of the Epistle of Jude: *Earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the Saints.* The ordaining prayer was made by the Reverend Elisha Snow, of Thomastown; the charge by the Reverend Abraham Cummings, of Vinal-Haven; the right hand of fellowship by the Reverend Elisha Williams, of Beverly; and the concluding prayer by the Reverend John Pitman, of Providence.

(*FINIS.*)

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